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RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

I HAVE thought that the following narration, translated from the Accounts of the Death of some of the Monks of La Trappe, might, notwithstanding its Catholic complexion, be interesting to some of your readers. I own it has interested myself; and it has suggested a few observations, which I have ventured to annex to it.

H.

ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF BROTHER BENEDICT, THE FIRST; COMMONLY CALLED, "BENEDICT DES CHAMPS," WHO DIED AT LA TRAPPE, 20TH AUGUST, 1674.

The brother Benedict, of the diocese of Rouen, died five years and a half after his profession, the day of the fête of our father St. Bernard, aged 32 years. And as God visited him peculiarly with his grace in the progress of his disease, and at the time of his death, it has been thought desirable, in order both to recognise the mercy of Christ and for the edification of his community, to record the principal circumstances of his life and death.

He fell sick nearly four years before his death, of a disease upon his chest. And although, after that time, he was almost continually oppressed with a violent cough, with extreme pain, and with an intermitting fever, he never manifested either the smallest impatience of his suffering, or the smallest desire to be cured. About the Christmas of the year 1673, which preceded his death a few months, his disease increased. But he did not cease to

discharge the peculiar offices prescribed to penitents in the monastery. The fever which seized him about the middle of Christmas did not prevent his following the same course of life he had long pursued. Five days after Easter, his disease having considerably advanced, the reverend Father Abbé ordered him to be conducted to the infirmary. There his fever immediately increased, his limbs inflamed, his cough became more violent, and the struggles in which he passed his nights quite exhausted him. Notwithstanding this, he continued to lie on his hard pailleasse, till the moment when they removed him to the ashes, five hours before his death. He rose at four in the morning; he dined at the table of the infirmary, though his weakness was such that he was evidently unable to sustain the weight of his own head. During this time, nothing was to be discovered upon his countenance which did not evidence the most complete tranquillity. He had been remarkably ingenious, and had nothing about him which he had not both invented and executed. Three weeks before his death he said to the Father Abbé, that as he had been in the habit of constructing many things for the convenience of the monastery, and as it might be troublesome to the Abbé to discover and introduce workmen into the house at his death, he would on this account, if agreeable to the Abbé, instruct one of the brothers in his various arts. The Abbé having consented, he instructed a monk in less than a fortnight in the different arts in which he had been ac-

customed to be employed. And, notwithstanding his weakness and pain, he did all this with so much patience and collectedness, that he seemed to have lost all remembrance of his sufferings. The Father Abbé, knowing the grace which God had given to him, and the degree in which God had detached him from the world, thought it his duty to follow up what he believed to be the designs of Providence with regard to him. This led him in the various ordinances of religion, to maintain all the rigour which charity and prudence would permit; though in all private communications with him he treated him with the tenderness of a father. One day, when so overcome with pain that he could take nothing, he described his state to the Father Abbé, accompanying his description with certain expressions of countenance which it is almost impossible to restrain in such circumstances. The Father Abbé, however, said with severity (as though he had no compassion for those sufferings in which he sympathized so truly,) that "he spoke like a man of this world, and that a monk ought to manifest, under the worst circumstances, the constancy of his soul." Benedict in an instant assumed that air of serenity that never afterwards quitted him. The fear lest the great exertions which he made by day and by night, combined with his extreme debility, might suddenly remove him, led them to give him the holy sacrament and extreme unction. He received both with every demonstration of piety. Such, however, was his weakness, that he immediately fainted away. The Father Abbé having asked, before they brought him the extreme unction, if he desired that the whole community should be present at the ceremony, he answered, that "exterior ceremonies were not of vital importance; that his brethren would derive little edification from him; and

that he had more want of their prayers than of their presence." All his conversation during his malady was on the necessity of separation from worldly things, of the joy which he anticipated in death, and of the mercy which God had shewn him in suffering him to finish his days in the society of the Father Abbé.

Some days before his death, the Father Abbé inquired minutely into the state of his mind: he answered in these very words:—"I consider the day of my death as a festival; I have no desire for any thing here; and I cannot better express my total separation from things below than by comparing myself to a leaf which the wind has lifted from the earth. All that I have read in the sacred Scriptures comes home to me, and fills me with joy. *Nevertheless, I can in no action of my life see any thing which can sustain the judgment of God, and which is not worthy of punishment*; but the confidence which I have in his goodness gives me consolation and hope." He added—"How can it be, that God should shew such compassion to a man who has so miserably served him? I desire death alone: what can man be thinking of, not always to desire it? What joy, my Father, when I remember that I am about to refresh myself in the waters of life?"

His ordinary reading, for many years of his life, had been the sacred Scriptures, which were so familiar to him, that he spoke of little else. He mentioned to the Father Abbé so many passages, and repeated them in a manner so touching, so animated, and so devotional, that his hearers were at once edified and astonished. Those passages which were uppermost in his mind respected chiefly the majesty of God; but as he had a most humble opinion of his own life, which had, however, been, in the main, faithful and pure, he always reverted to the subject of

the Divine compassion. It was in that he found peace and repose.

On the day of the "assumption," he felt himself so weak, that he was unable to leave the infirmary. The Father Abbé carried him our Lord, whom he received upon his knees, leaning on two of his brethren. Two days afterwards he fell into strong convulsions, and imagined that the hour of his deliverance was come. The Father Abbé asked—"Is it with joy that you depart?" "Yes;" said he, "from my very heart." He then added, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit."

The customary prayers were then offered up for the dying; but the convulsions having left him, the Father Abbé said that the hour of God was not arrived; and having given orders to remove him from the ashes to his bed, he turned to the Father Abbé with a serene countenance, and said, "The will of God be done." He lived three days, waiting with anxiety the time when God would have mercy upon him. And such was his desire of death, that the Father Abbé was obliged more than once to say to him that it was not for him to anticipate the designs of Providence. His pangs lasted till within an hour of his death; but he endured them with his accustomed patience and serenity. He said, three days before his death, that the most dangerous moments were the last, and that he did not doubt the great enemy of man would be employed to disquiet him; and therefore requested the prayers of the community. The Father Abbé having asked, after some other general discourse, if he "knew the guilt of sin;" he answered, sighing, and, as it were, looking into the recesses of his own soul, and in language expressive of the intensity of his feelings—"Alas! once I knew it not; but now I see in the Scripture that God claims, as one of his chief attributes, the power of pardoning sin:—I am he who blotteth out

your iniquities.' I am, therefore, convinced that sin is a tremendous offence. Far am I, indeed, from being like those who are always overwhelmed with a consciousness of their offences; but yet I believe upon the testimony of faith and Scripture, that sin is an immeasurable gulf of ruin." These words were accompanied with a manner so extraordinary, that they touched the very hearts of those who surrounded him.

His bones having pierced his skin, and his shirt of serge sticking to his wounds, he begged them to move him a little; but at the end of the day, when the person who had the care of him wished again to ease his body, he said, "My brother, you give me too much ease." The Father Abbé having ordered some milk to be brought him, which was the only nourishment he took, he said, "You wish then, my Father, to prolong my life, and are unwilling I should die on the day of St. Bernard." The Father Abbé having quitted him, he begged, perceiving that his death approached, that he might be called back. As soon as he saw him he said, "My Father, my eyes fail me—it is finished." The Father having asked him in what state he found himself, and if he was about to approach Christ—"Yes, my Father," said he, "by the grace of God, I am. I am not, indeed, sensible of any extraordinary elevation of my mind to God; but, through his mercy, I am in perfect peace. God be thanked!" This he repeated three times. The Father Abbé having asked him if he wished to die upon the cross, and upon the ashes; "Yes," said he, "from my heart." With these words he lost his speech; or, at all events, it was impossible to hear any thing intelligible from him, except the name of Jesus, which he pronounced repeatedly. They carried him to the straw spread out in his chamber. He was nearly four hours in

a dying state; and preserved his recollection during the whole time. His eyes indicating a wandering state of mind, the Father arose, took some holy water, and, having scattered it around him, repeated these words, "Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered." His face at this moment collected itself. He kissed the cross several times; and wanting strength to lay hold of it, they observed that he advanced his head to adore it every time that it was presented to him. At length, all his disquietudes ceased: they beheld him calm, peaceful, and serene; and he breathed his last sigh with so much tranquillity, that those who watched him scarcely perceived his death.

[The account goes on to tell us, with a credulity ill-becoming so grave a history, that, by some Divine interference, the body of St. Benedict retained, after death, all the pliability of life.]

I cannot persuade myself to conclude this article without adding a few comments upon it.

In the first place, your readers cannot fail to be struck with the doctrinal incorrectness of several parts of this paper; and especially with the breadth and explicitness of the phrase in which the capital error of transubstantiation is expressed. I notice this, not, by any means, to depreciate the value of this interesting memoir, nor the piety of the individual whom it concerns—but to observe that, if such was the language of Popery among men of refinement and education, how coarse a form was that doctrine likely to take among the vulgar. Indeed it is almost incredible that men of sense should not at once be revolted by an expression such as that of "bringing the Lord," and by the doctrine conveyed by it. And their submission to it can be solved only on the principle that they deemed an admission of impossibilities an evi-

dence of faith. When once the doctrine is adopted that reason is not to be exercised in matters of religion, it becomes almost a point of duty to be as unreasonable as possible.

Another circumstance which can scarcely fail to strike your readers is, the degree in which real and sincere religious feeling, in practice at least, and under the Divine blessing, neutralizes the defects of a theological creed. There can be no question that the theory of Popery strongly inculcates the merit of works; and that this is the point on which the Reformers especially took their stand in pleading for a separation from the Church of Rome. But who would have suspected this error to have been predominant in the creed of "St. Benedict," when listening to his dying language? The fact is, that the Spirit of God, by which, it is impossible to doubt, this dying man had been taught, teaches but one doctrine, or rather infuses but one disposition—and that is, a disposition to acknowledge our own guilt, and to rest exclusively for salvation upon the mercy of God and the merits of a Redeemer. This concurrence of the dying servants of God in one doctrine—this ultimate adherence to one truth—this practical departure from various theological creeds to embrace one article of faith at a moment when the strength and worth of religion are chiefly tried—are to me decisive proofs of the truth of the doctrine itself. Error may possess sufficient power to sustain the mind under ordinary trials. It may even partially sustain a few persons, in whom the delusion is more than usually strong, under the last great trial. But it is only truth which can sustain *all* men under this trial; and therefore it is in truth they take refuge. The centurion who watched around the cross possibly joined in the insults offered to our Lord by the mob; perhaps thrust the spear into his

side, or drove the nails into his feet. Yet, when a sudden darkness veiled the heavens and the earth, and the rocks were rent, and the dead arose, and each man apprehended the hour of his dissolution to be come—he exclaimed, “Truly this was the Son of God.” Thus the dying servants of God, though betrayed for a time by their education, or deluded by the speciousness of error, yet, in the moment of trial, exclaim, “God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Finally, it is almost impossible, I think, not to be disposed, by the reading of memoirs such as these, to mitigate something of our severity to Papists, and not to enter upon a stricter examination of ourselves. I am no apologist for monastic institutions. I place it among the evils of Popery, that it nourished a system so unfavourable to industry, to domestic religion, to that amalgamation of the religious with the mixed orders of society, by which the clergy become less bigoted and the laity more devout. But I cannot help feeling both astonished and humbled, when I read of men who, with what I should deem a severe and gloomy view of the character of God, yet maintained a frame of mind so devout and tender to their heavenly Father. They seem in theory to know the Divine Being less as the “God” who “is love,” than Protestants; and yet they render to Him a homage, and they speak of Him in a language, which would be more natural on our lips than theirs. And here, perhaps, I may be permitted to observe that one of the palpable defects of the religion of the day appears to me to be—the want of a devotional spirit. There is much zeal, much correctness, much benevolence; but, I fear, comparatively little devotion—little of that secret communion with God, of those quiet exercises of religion which, after all, are, perhaps, the

least suspicious evidences of a mind right with God, and fitted for heaven.—The intention of the Divine Being doubtless is, that, as in the case of our Lord, activity and devotion should go hand in hand—that he who spends the day in doing good, should rise before day to hold devout communion with God. But the danger is, lest, instead of combining these duties, we should separate them, and make the discharge of one a compensation for the neglect of another; lest we should propose to ourselves so many practical duties as to leave no leisure for devotional employments; lest we should so exhaust the mind in action as to leave no strength for prayer; lest we should fancy that we may select our favourite line of duty, and, so that our hours are carefully filled up, conclude we may fill them up as we will. But God will be served, if I may so express it, in his own manner. We must not allow ourselves in what may be called a substitution of duties—in the discharging a few more of one kind, that we may discharge a few less of another.—I venture to own that I rarely attend the public meetings in the metropolis for religious objects without having these observations rivetted on my own mind. I sometimes ask myself—“Will these thousands return home to secret devotion—will their humility survive the plaudits for religious zeal—will the spirit of prayer live in this heated and perturbed atmosphere?” I confidently believe that, in many instances, all these questions might be answered in the affirmative. And I put them rather in the way of caution than of reprehension; rather from what I anticipate, than from what I see. I put them because, having narrowly watched the workings of at least one mind, I discover reasons for watchfulness and suspicion there; and knowing the universality and resemblance of our moral diseases and infirmities, I venture to conclude

that what is dangerous to one may not be absolutely safe to many. Perhaps, sir, it might be no bad expedient for those who have stood awhile on the hustings of the Bible Society to retire from thence, in imagination at least, to the deep and gloomy shades of La Trappe; there to divide, as it were, the world between God and ourselves; there to hold secret communion with Heaven; there to "commune with our own hearts, and be still."

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

IF the following letter from Archbishop Usher, on the death of Christ, and his satisfaction on the cross, appear as valuable to you as to myself, you will be glad to insert it in the Christian Observer. G. S.

"The all sufficient satisfaction of Christ was made for the sins of the whole world. The true intent and extent is *lubricus locus* to be handled, and hath, and doth now much trouble the Church: this question hath been moved *sub eisdem terminis quibus nunc*, and hath received contrary resolutions; the reason is, that in the two extremities of opinion held in this matter, there is somewhat true, and somewhat false; the one extremity extends the benefits of Christ's satisfaction too far, as if hereby God, for his part, were actually reconciled to all mankind, and did really discharge every man from all his sins, and that the reason why all men do not reap the fruit of this benefit, is the want of that faith, whereby they ought to have believed, that God in this sort did love them: whence it would follow, that God should forgive a man his sins, and justify him, before he believed; whereas the elect themselves, before their effectual vocation, are said to be without Christ, and to be without hope, and to be utter strangers from the covenants of promise.—Ephes. ii. 2.

"2. The other extremity con-

tracts the riches of Christ's satisfaction into too narrow a room; as if none had any kind of interest therein, but such as were elected before the foundation of the world; howsoever by the Gospel, every one be charged to receive the same; whereby it would follow, that a man should be bound in conscience to believe that which is untrue, and charged to take that wherewith he hath nothing to do.

"Both extremities then drawing with them unavoidable absurdities, the Word of God (by hearing whereof faith is begotten, Ephes. i. 13.) must be sought unto, by a middle course, to avoid these extremities.

"For finding out this middle course, we must, in the matter of our redemption, carefully put a distinction betwixt the satisfaction of Christ absolutely considered, and the application thereof to every one in particular: the former was once done for all; the other is still in doing: the former brings with it sufficiency abundant to discharge the whole debt; the other adds to its efficacy. The satisfaction of Christ only makes the sins of mankind fit for pardon, which without it could not well be; the injury done to God's majesty being so great, that it could not stand with his honour to put it up without amends made. The particular application makes the sins of those to whom that mercy is vouchsafed to be actually pardoned. For as all sins are mortal in regard to the stipend due thereunto by the Law, but all do not actually bring forth death, because the gracious promise of the Gospel stayeth the execution; even so all the sins of mankind are become venial, in respect of the price paid by Christ to his Father (so far, that in shewing mercy upon all, if so it were his pleasure, his justice should be no loser); but all do not obtain actual remission, because most offenders do not take out, nor plead their pardon as they

ought to do. If Christ had not assumed our nature, and therein made satisfaction for the injury offered to the Divine Majesty, God would not have come into a treaty of peace with us more than with the fallen angels, whose nature the Son did not assume: but this way being made, God holds out unto us the golden sceptre of his word, and thereby not only signifieth his pleasure of admitting us unto his presence, and accepting of our submission, which is a wonderful grace, but also sends an embassy unto us, and entreats us that we would be reconciled unto them.— 2 Cor. v. 20.

“Hence we infer against the first extremity, that by the virtue of this blessed oblation, God is made placable unto our nature (which he never will be unto the angelical nature offending); but not actually appeased with any, until he hath received his Son, and put on the Lord Jesus. As also, against the latter extremity, that all men may be truly said to have interest in the merits of Christ, as in a common; though all do not enjoy the benefit thereof, because they have no will to take it.

“The well-spring of life is set open unto all; Rev. xxii. 17. ‘Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely;’ but many have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep.’ Faith is the vessel whereby we draw all virtue from Christ; and the Apostle tells us, that faith is not of all; 2 Thess. iii. 2. Now the means of getting this faith is the hearing of the word of truth, the Gospel of our salvation, Eph. i. 13, which ministereth this general ground for every one to build his faith upon.

“Syllogism. What Christ hath prepared for thee, and the Gospel offereth unto thee, that oughtest thou with all thankfulness to accept and apply to the comfort of thy own soul. But Christ by his death and obedience hath provided a sufficient remedy for the taking away of all thy sins, and the Gospel offereth

the same unto thee. Therefore thou oughtest to accept and apply the same to the comfort of thine own soul.

“Now this Gospel of salvation many do not hear at all, being destitute of the ministry of the word; and many hearing do not believe, or lightly regard it; and many that do believe the truth thereof, are so wedded to their sins, that they have no desire to be divorced from them: and therefore they refuse to accept the gracious offer that is made unto them. And yet, notwithstanding this refusal on their part, we may truly say, that good things were provided for them on Christ’s part, and a rich prize was put into the hands of a fool, howsoever he had no heart to use it. Prov. xvii. 16.

“Our blessed Saviour, by that which he hath performed on his part, hath procured a jubilee for the sons of Adam; and his Gospel is his trumpet, whereby he doth proclaim liberty to the captives, and preacheth the acceptable year of the Lord. Luke iv. 18, 19. If for all this some are so well pleased with their captivity, that they desire no deliverance, that derogates nothing from the generality of the freedom annexed to that year. If one say to sin, his old master (Levit. xxv. 39; Exod. xxi. 5; Deut. xv. 66), I love thee, and will not go out free, he shall be bored for a slave and serve for ever. But that slavish disposition of his maketh the extent of the privilege of that year not a whit the straighter, because *he* was included within the general grant, as well as others, howsoever he was not disposed to take the benefit of it. The kingdom of heaven is like to a certain king that made a marriage for his son, and sent his servants to those that were bidden to the wedding with this message: ‘Behold I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come to the marriage.’ (Matt. xxiv.) If we

look to the event, they that were bidden made light of their entertainment, and went their ways, one 'to his farm, and another to his merchandise,' (verse 5); but that neglect of theirs doth not falsify the word of the king (verse 4), viz. that the dinner was prepared, and these unworthy guests were invited thereunto: for 'what if some did not believe, shall their unbelief disannul the faith and truth of God?' (Rom. iii. 3, 4.) 'God forbid; yea, let God be true and every man a liar, as it is written, that thou mayest be justified in thy saying, and overcome when thou judgest.' Let not the house of Israel say, The way of the Lord is unequal. For when he cometh to judge them, the inequality will be found on their side, and not on his. 'O house of Israel, are not my ways equal; are not your ways unequal, saith the Lord.' Ezek. xviii. 29. 'The Lord is right in all his ways, and holy in all his works.' All the ways of our God are mercy and truth: when we were in our sins, it was of his infinite mercy that any way or remedy should be prepared for our recovery: and when the remedy is prepared, we are never the nearer, except he be pleased, of his free mercy, to apply the same to us, that so the whole praise of our redemption, from the beginning to the end thereof, may entirely be attributed to the riches of his grace, and nothing left to sinful flesh wherein it may rejoice.

"The freeing of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon, was a type of that great deliverance which the Son of God hath wrought for us.

"Cyrus, king of Persia, who was *Christus Domini* (and herein but a shadow of *Christus Dominus*, the author of our redemption), published his proclamation in this manner: 'Who is amongst you of all his people, the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.' (Ezra i. 2, and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23.) Now it is true they alone did follow this

calling, whose spirit God had raised to go up. (Ezra i. 5.) But, could they that remained still in Babylon justly plead, that the king's grant was not large enough, or that they were excluded from going up by any clause contained therein? The matter of our redemption, purchased by our Saviour Christ lieth open to all: all are invited to it: none that hath a mind to accept it is excluded from it. The beautiful feet of those that preach the Gospel of peace do bring glad tidings of good things to every house where they tread, the first part of their message being this: "Peace to this house." (Rom. x. 15; Luke x. 5.) But unless God be pleased, out of his abundant mercy, to guide our feet into the way of peace, the rebellion of our nature is such, that we run headlong to the ways of destruction and misery. Rom. iii. 16. And the ways of peace do we not know. They have not all obeyed the Gospel. Rom. x. 16. All are not apt to entertain this message of peace; and, therefore, though God's ambassadors make a true tender of it to all unto whom they are sent, yet their peace only resteth on the sons of peace: but if it meet with such as will not listen to the motion of it, their peace doth again return unto themselves. Luke x. 6. The proclamation of the Gospel runneth thus (Rev. xxii. 17.): 'Let him that is athirst come;' for him this grace is specially provided, because none but he will take the pains to come: but lest we should think this should abridge the largeness of the offer, a *quicunque vult* is immediately added; 'and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely:' yet withal this must be yielded for a certain truth, that it is God who must work in us to will and to do of his good pleasure; and though the call be never so loud and large, yet none can come except the Father draw him. John vi. 44. For the universality of the satis-

faction derogates nothing from the necessity of the special grace in the application: neither doth the speciality of the one any ways abridge the generality of the other. Indeed, Christ our Saviour saith (John xvii. 9), "I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me:" but the consequence hereby inferred may well be excepted against, viz.; He prayeth not for the world; therefore he payed not for the world; because the latter is an act of his satisfaction, the former of his intercession, which, being divers parts of his priesthood, are distinguishable one from another by sundry differences. This his satisfaction doth properly give contentment to God's justice, in such sort as formerly hath been declared: his intercession doth solicit God's mercy. The first contains the preparation of the remedy necessary for man's salvation; the second brings with it an application of the same. And consequently the one may well appertain to the common nature which the Son assumed, when the other is a special privilege vouchsafed to such particular persons, only, as the Father hath given him. And therefore we may safely conclude out of all these premises, that the Lamb of God offering himself a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, intended, by giving sufficient satisfaction to God's justice, to make the nature of man, which he assumed, a fit subject for mercy, and to prepare a medicine for the sins of the whole world, which should be denied to none that intended to take the benefit of it. Howsoever he intended not, by applying this all-sufficient remedy unto every person in particular, to make it effectual unto the salvation of all, or to procure thereby actual pardon for the sins of the whole world. So, in one respect, he may be said to have died for all, and, in another respect, not to have died for all; yet so, as in respect of his mercy, he may be counted a kind of universal cause of the restoring

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of our nature, as Adam was of the depraving of it; for as far as I can discern, he rightly hits the nail on the head, that determineth the point in this manner:

"Thomas, contra Gentiles, lib. iv. 55.

"*Mors Christi est quasi quædam universalis causa salutis; sicut peccatum primi hominis fuit quasi universalis causa damnationis. Oportet autem universalem causam applicari ad unumquemque specialiter, ut effectum universalis causæ participet. Effectus igitur peccati primi parentis pervenit ad unumquemque per carnis originem; effectus autem mortis Christi pertinet ad unumquemque per spiritualem regenerationem, per quam Christo homo quodammodo conjungitur et incorporatur.*"

"JAMES USHER.

"March 3, 1617."

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

As expositors of prophecy, particularly in the present eventful times, can never be too careful in accurately surveying their ground; I send you an argument, relative to the apocalyptic arrangement of the 1260 years, which has recently occurred to me, and which I would recommend to the consideration of Mr. Cuninghame and other expositors who believe that that great period has *already* expired.

My own opinion has always been, that the 1260 years *commence* with the sounding of the fifth trumpet, which ushers in the first wo; and that they *expire* with the effusion of the seventh vial, when a great voice declares, *It is done*. Hence I conceive them to comprehend the whole of the first wo, the whole of the second wo, and the six earliest vials included under the third wo. It is plain, therefore, that I suppose, as is most natural, both their *commencement* and their *termination* to be marked by *distinctly specified apocalyptic epochs*.

The opinion of Mr. Cuninghame, on the contrary, is, that the 1260 years commenced about the year 532; which is no determinate apocalyptic epoch, but a year which occurs somewhere between the sounding of the fourth and the sounding of the fifth trumpet; and that they expired about the year 1792, when he supposes the seventh trumpet to have sounded, and the third wo to have commenced. His arrangement, therefore, has the disadvantage of making them commence at a point which *does not* coincide with any one of the great apocalyptic epochs; while it dissimilarly makes them terminate at a point which (in his hypothesis) *does* coincide with one of the great apocalyptic epochs.

Now, as Mr. Cuninghame, like myself, rightly pronounces all the seven vials to be *component parts* of the third wo, and consequently to be *posterior in point of time* to the commencement of the seventh trumpet, which ushers in the third wo; it is obvious, that, according to *my* arrangement of the 1260 years, the six first vials are *included within* that period; while, according to *his* arrangement, they are *excluded from* it, and are *consecutive* to it. Here, therefore, the question is narrowed into this consideration—whether six of the vials *ought*, or *ought not*, to be included within the period of the 1260 years. If the former, then Mr. Cuninghame's arrangement is clearly wrong; if the latter, then it may or may not be right. Supposing, therefore, it can be proved that even a *single* vial ought to be *included within* the 1260 years, Mr. Cuninghame's arrangement would by such proof be immediately subverted: for *he* makes that period terminate *at the beginning* of the third wo, and rightly supposes all the vials to be *posterior* to the beginning of that wo; consequently, with *him* every vial is *posterior* to the termination of the 1260 years, and therefore no one vial is *included within* them.

Now, such a proof I engage to furnish; that is to say, I undertake to prove, that one or more of the vials must necessarily be *comprehended within* the 1260 years; whence it will plainly follow, that these years cannot have expired *previous* to the effusion of *all* the vials, the point to be established.

1. The sackcloth-prophecy of the witnesses, and the 1260 years, exactly coincide, from their respective commencements to their respective terminations.

2. Whatever, therefore, occurs during the sackcloth-prophecy of the witnesses, occurs also during the lapse of the 1260 years.

3. But we are told, that the witnesses, during the days of their prophecy, have power over waters to turn them to blood, and have power over the earth to smite it with all plagues. (Rev. xi. 6.)

4. Hence it follows, that the turning of the waters into blood, and the smiting of the earth with certain plagues, occur during the sackcloth-prophecy of the witnesses.

5. But the sackcloth-prophecy of the witnesses exactly coincides with the 1260 years.

6. Therefore the turning of the waters into blood, and the smiting of the earth with certain plagues, occur during the lapse of the 1260 years, and are thence, of course, included within them.

7. But the waters are turned into blood under the second and third vials: and the first, the fifth, and the sixth vials are all poured out upon the earth; as are likewise, indeed, the second and third, if the symbolical earth be viewed in a large sense as opposed to the symbolical heavens. Moreover, all the vials are expressly called *plagues*. (Rev. xv. 1.)

8. Hence it appears, that the waters are turned into blood, and the earth is smitten with certain plagues, under the first, second, third, fifth, and sixth vials.

9. But such calamities were to

befal the waters and the earth during the sackcloth-propheying of the witnesses, and consequently during the lapse of the 1260 years.

10. Therefore the first, second, third, fifth, and sixth vials, and thence also palpably the fourth vial, which occurs in the very midst of them, must all be included within the sackcloth-propheying of the witnesses.

11. But, if the six first vials must all be included within the sackcloth-propheying, they must likewise be all included within the 1260 years.

12. Consequently, since all the six first vials must be *included*, by the express terms of the prophecy, *within* the 1260 years; those 1260 years cannot expire *previous* to the effusion of the six first vials.

13. But Mr. Cuninghame makes them expire *previous* to the effusion of any one of the vials: therefore Mr. Cuninghame's arrangement must, even on his own acknowledged principles, be erroneous.

Mede avoids this difficulty, by placing most incongruously and arbitrarily the six first vials under the second wo, and by making the third wo and the seventh vial commence synchronically. Such an arrangement enables *him* to suppose, that the 1260 years expire at the commencement *both* of the third wo and of the seventh vial. But no expositor, who places *all* the seven vials under the third wo, where homogeneity manifestly requires that they *should* be placed: no expositor, who *thus* arranges them, can, consistently with the terms of the prophecy (Rev. xi. 6, compared with Rev. xv. 1, xvi. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12,) make the 1260 years expire *at the commencement* of the third wo, and therefore *previous* to the effusion of the vials. If Mr. Cuninghame, in short, retains his arrangement of the 1260 years, he must, so far as I can judge, give up his arrangement of the vials. The two cannot stand together.

I take this opportunity of mentioning, that I believe the French Revolutionary Government, from the year 1808, down to the present time, has been under the baneful influence of the fifth vial. It is not impossible that that vial may not be yet exhausted: should that be the case, we may expect the French arms to experience further reverses. I fear, however, that nothing will prevent the *ultimate* re-establishment of the Franco Roman western empire; though such re-establishment will only be the prelude to its final subversion, and though I much incline to believe that England, though scourged, will be safe in the midst of the whirlwind.—My principles of exposition led me to anticipate the downfall of the Bourbons and the restoration of the Revolutionary Government, even from the very first. My reasoning was of course hypothetical: *IF my principles were right, THEN such and such events must inevitably follow.* Yet I felt them to be so strongly established, that I had little fear in reasoning upon them accordingly. In a note to the 5th edition of my work on the 1260 years, which is dated July 28, 1814, I stated at large the grounds of my persuasion, that the Bourbons would not long reign in France, and that the Revolutionary Government would soon be restored. The reader will find that note in vol. ii. p. 400.

G. S. FABER.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

HAVING ventured, some time ago, to offer a few remarks on a system of theology which appeared to me to proceed on a high and disproportionate view of some parts of religious truth,* I have been induced to bring before your readers the counterpart, as it were, of those

* Vol. for 1814, p. 620.

observations, by detailing the chief points in which a large body of respectable and, in many cases, as I hope, pious persons seem to me to fall short of the real standard of scriptural instruction. That there are dangers on each side of the question, can admit of no doubt. It may even be naturally expected, that in a period in which the church of Christ enjoys undisturbed outward tranquillity, there should imperceptibly arise a class of truly excellent individuals, who adopt, almost unknown to themselves, a low and defective system of religious sentiment, and, consequently, lose much of the grace of the Holy Spirit, and of the efficiency of their ministry. Errors of defect are, perhaps, more common than those of excess, and are certainly quite as pernicious. The principal difficulty which I feel in entering on the subject is that which pressed upon me when I was drawing up the former paper—the danger, or rather, in many instances, the certainty, of being misunderstood as to the motives and spirit of the attempt. Such is the infirmity of our common nature, even in truly good men, that the most friendly and affectionate statements, if they are made to bear plainly on any class of erroneous sentiments, are inevitably considered, by some of the individuals who are most concerned, as severe and hostile. I know no method of obviating this real difficulty, except by endeavouring to exercise increased vigilance over my own spirit, in any observations I may venture to make, and by fervently praying to God so to influence the minds of my brethren, that they may receive with candour and good will, any suggestions which may appear to them to be agreeable to the unerring word of God. It is only by this mutual charity that the ends of truth can be obtained, errors as they arise be detected, the snares of Satan broken, ardour for improvement in the minds of ministers en-

kindled, and the edification of our hearers and the glory of our God and Saviour promoted.

1. The first point to which I would call the attention of your readers, is, *an inadequate view of the real extent of man's ruin and depravity.*—It is easy, by a few rash and sweeping expressions, to exceed the statements of Scripture on this subject, and violate the plain truth of the case; but it is far more easy, by general and timid descriptions, to weaken the whole force of this fundamental doctrine. The Scripture describes man as "alienated from the life of God;" as "dead in trespasses and sins," as in a state of "enmity against God," as incapable of "discerning the things of the Spirit," as evil, "only evil continually, in the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart," as "without hope, and without God in the world." But is this the view of man's condition by nature, which we often hear inculcated? Are not far softer terms employed in describing his moral state? Is the conviction that no one thing spiritually good can proceed from man, without the preventing grace of God, fixed deeply in the mind? Do not many amiable and estimable persons, though they admit the doctrine, yet fail in a full, and plain, and frequent statement of it? Do they not confound, at times, the civil and social virtues, which they justly admire in some persons, and the knowledge and decency which they commend, and properly commend, in others, with the fruits and evidences of spiritual grace? The whole of our instructions must be of a low and comparatively inefficient character, if we do not thoroughly understand the fall and depravity of man. The remedy can never be perceived, if the disease is not. The total ruin of mankind in the first Adam, and their gracious recovery in the Second, have a necessary relation to each other, and lie at the foundation of

true Christianity. We are manifestly in danger, in such a day as this, of courting the approbation of the superficial and worldly, by partial or qualified representations of this subject. To comprehend fully, and explain with becoming fidelity, the total apostacy of man from God, the corruption of his heart, and his impotency to what is good, requires no ordinary effort. It must be the result of unremitted prayer, constant study of the Holy Scriptures, elevated views of the nature of spiritual religion, clear perceptions of the evil of sin, and close observation of the history of man in every age. If our attention to these great topics decline, so will our capacity of estimating the true state and character of man. It is only in the pure light of Scripture, accompanied with the grace of the Holy Spirit, that we can fully discover, and adequately feel, the real bearings and fundamental importance of the doctrine of the fall.

2. Connected with this error is a deficiency too observable in many ministers in *unfolding the holy law of God*.—"By the law is the knowledge of sin." "Sin by the commandment," and by that alone, "becomes exceeding sinful." "I through the law," says the Apostle, "am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." It is by the moral law, as the "ministry of condemnation and death," that it pleases God to convince men of the danger and guilt of their state, and their need of repentance and salvation. If this eternal rule of good and evil is not plainly exhibited and enforced in its spirituality, extent, excellency, and sanctions, we cannot expect any considerable effect to follow from our labours. The general spirit of the class of ministers of whom I am now speaking, seems to me to incline them to shrink from the painful but necessary duty of dwelling on this great subject. Other and far inferior rules

than that of "loving God with all the heart, and soul, and strength," and our "neighbour as ourselves," are insensibly proposed by them. Other standards of judging of our character and conduct are allowed to intrude. Their sermons are almost exclusively bestowed on subjects which only the truly Christian part of the congregation can rightly understand, and which the great body of it pervert, to confirm the favourite notion of a new or remedial law. In the mean time, plain and bold declarations of God's unerring commands; of their purity, justice, and goodness; of our infinite obligations to obey them; of the covenant of works; of the condescension and goodness of God in making this covenant; of the punishment threatened to every transgressor; of the sin and guilt of man; of the necessity of fleeing from the wrath to come, and embracing the mercy of Jesus Christ; of the distinction between the Law and the Gospel; of the impossibility of uniting the two in point of justification; and of the condemnation which rests upon us till we are saved by faith in the promises of the Gospel, are not sufficiently urged or not adequately explained. The consequence is, that our ministry is far from having that efficacy which we might otherwise have expected. I am not here to be misunderstood as confounding rashness with strength, or intemperance with fervour. The most tender affection, the utmost kindness and compassion of spirit, the most wakeful consideration of circumstances should not merely be apparent in this part of our ministry, but should actually fill and penetrate our hearts. A coarse, inconsiderate manner of uttering the most solemn denunciations with respect to the law of God, counteracts the effect we should endeavour to produce. The union of modesty and affection with plainness and zeal, or, to use the language of the Apostle, the "speaking the truth in love," will most effectually

tend, under the blessing of God, to convince the judgment and move the heart.

3 But I pass on to *the nature and necessity of the doctrine of spiritual regeneration and conversion to God*; in the statement of which the low description of divinity on which I am now venturing to animadvert is, I fear, particularly deficient.—A more widely pernicious error cannot, to my mind, be named, than that which confounds with the sacrament of baptism, or seems to confound with it, that universal change of the heart and life, without which our Lord declares a man “cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.” I am aware this is stating the case strongly. I shall be told, that if the term *regeneration* is disused on this subject, the thing is retained: and I am ready to admit this to a certain extent. But still I cannot conceal my apprehension, that we are losing ground on this doctrine generally among our young divines; and if we are, most assuredly every other truth will decline with it. The whole nature and importance of true religion, the main distinction between spiritual life and spiritual death; all that forms the support and nourishment of holiness and love to God; whatever relates to the grace and influence of God’s Holy Spirit; and the duties of communion with God and mortification of sin; must stand or fall with the doctrine of the New-birth. No better evasion can be desired by the worldly, and vain, and self-righteous, than that which modern divinity seems disposed to concede to them on this question. The fact, I apprehend, in many cases, is, that those who use language which favours the supposition of the identity of baptism and regeneration, have already too much conceded the real point in debate. The doctrine has been accommodated to the emergency. Such low and inadequate opinions of the ruined state of man, and of the necessity of an entire renewal in the spirit of his mind, have been formed, that it has at length

appeared an easy concession to allow that all that is included in the notion of the New-birth is necessarily connected with the administration of the external sacrament. I would be far from affirming that this is universally the case, but so far as my observation has reached, the extent and spirituality of the doctrine of regeneration itself have been imperceptibly lessened in proportion as the position with which I am now contending has been maintained. That God is pleased, in some instances, to connect the gift of regeneration with the due administration of baptism, no one can doubt; any more than he can question the strict propriety of the language of our church on this ground. But to imagine that this universal change of heart has actually taken place in every instance, contrary to the testimony of Scripture and of fact, does in my mind involve a sentiment, not merely erroneous, but one which tends to undermine the whole superstructure of Christian doctrine. Let the young divine examine carefully this important subject: let him highly esteem, as he ought, the sacraments which Christ hath ordained in his church: let the utmost charity be exercised in his judgment of particular cases: let him even form his own opinion, if I must make the concession, as to the frequent use of the mere term which is so much now the subject of controversy: but let him stand firm as to the doctrine itself. Let him dread any approaches to the popish error on this subject. Let him press upon the consciences of his parishioners, the nature and evidences of that inward “birth of the Spirit,” that “awakening out of sleep,” that “resurrection of the soul from the death of sin,” that “translation from the power of darkness to the kingdom of God’s dear Son,” that “new creation in Christ Jesus,” which is a fundamental branch of genuine Christianity, and indispensably necessary to the life and practice of all real religion. We never can ex-

pect a large effusion of God's Spirit on our ministrations, till a strong and definite view is taken of this great truth, and its unspeakable importance is clearly apprehended and honestly enforced.

4. The next point which has occurred to me, as deserving especial notice, is the defect of *not exhibiting sufficiently the doctrine of justification by faith and the glory of the cross of Christ*.—We almost insensibly fail here. We admit in theory, that "Christ crucified" should be the main topic of our ministry, and that the various other subjects which it is our duty to unfold, should be kept in due subordination to it. But do not these minor and dependent subjects too often obscure, in the present day, the fundamental truth which they ought to illustrate and enforce? Is not the salvation of the Cross rather taken for granted and alluded to, than brought forward with that affection and frequency which we ourselves allow that it deserves? The doctrine of righteousness through the obedience of the eternal Son of God, is not soon apprehended by our hearers; and when it is apprehended, is not soon embraced with the heart and expanded into all those important topics, which are involved in the stupendous mystery. The pride and self-righteousness of our hearts are as deplorable as the sensuality and worldliness of them. It is only by long and patient instruction, combined with the illumination of the Holy Spirit, and the gradual conviction of the impossibility of establishing any righteousness of their own, that our hearers are at length induced to receive with simplicity and gratitude the gift of righteousness by faith. The notion that we do not need to be justified absolutely by a gracious act of mercy, independently of our own works or deservings, is ever obtruding itself. We form a wrong conception of the nature of Christianity, as well as of our own

desperate ruin; and these views can only be corrected by repeated details of the plan of salvation, of the vicarious sufferings of Jesus Christ, and of the mercy of gratuitous justification as the introduction to every other part of the Christian life and duty. We can scarcely imagine how slow our people are in learning this grand lesson. For the difficulty is not merely on the part of those who are not yet sufficiently contrite, but also on the part of those who are. The really broken spirit is not soon raised to faith and hope in the sacrifice of Christ. It droops and sinks into despondency. The mercy which before it did not appear fully to need, now seems incapable of embracing and relieving its wretchedness. Only the most scriptural and simple displays of the grace of Christ, and these repeated and varied in almost every form, can, under the blessing of the Holy Spirit, lead the mind by faith to real repose and peace.

And, after this point is in some measure attained, what is to be the source of all the instructions which regard the believer's spirit and conduct? What is to nourish the principle of the Christian life? What to animate to duty? What to support under suffering? What to rescue from the world, the flesh, and the devil? What to make the commandments of God delightful? What to be the joy, and strength, and foundation, and stay of the Christian in his whole conduct? Are not the name of our adorable Lord, the grace, the Spirit, the promises, to be made the spring of all these various duties and efforts? The full exhibition, then, of this great subject is a matter of the very first moment. It is not indeed to be the exclusive topic, but it is to be the prominent one. It is not to supersede the many important subjects which are connected with it in the word of God, but it is to give life and efficiency to them all. It is to be "the heaven which is to heaven

the whole lump." It is to be the key-stone which is to hold together and preserve the entire fabric. And this is to be done, not by repeating in a tame and ordinary manner the name of Christ; nor by indulging in certain current, but not very intelligible, modes of expression, much less by descending to low and really exceptionable phrases; but by endeavouring to inculcate high conceptions of the Saviour, ardent love to his name, simple faith in his sacrifice, sacred impressions of his presence, comprehensive views of the testimony of the Scripture with regard to him, and inextinguishable desires after his blessings. I need not say, that the world will not readily endure this full and adequate display of the truth of Christ Jesus: nor is it necessary for me to point out the obvious temptation to which in these days we are exposed, of concealing or limiting some branches of this offensive but astonishing theme. I will only observe, that in proportion to our wise and scriptural discharge of this first duty of our ministry, will be the measure of that blessing of the Holy Spirit on which alone the success of our efforts depends.

5. The doctrine which relates to *the person and influences of the Holy Spirit* is allied with the preceding, and is one in which we are equally in danger of failing—There is no truth of Revelation which is more exposed than this, to the impiety of a proud philosophical scepticism. All claim to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, however sober and scriptural, is at once consigned to unmeasured contempt. The consequence is, that many amiable persons, especially if they are young and inexperienced in the ministry, are too naturally led to keep back in some degree the full declarations of the sacred Scriptures on this subject. Thus they "grieve the Holy Spirit of God." Instead of largely and expressly insisting on His personality, Deity, and grace, too many rest contented with low and disproportionate statements.

Even where the doctrine of the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus Christ is in a great measure developed, there are many cases where the truths which relate to the influences of the blessed Spirit have by no means their due place. And yet is not the Holy Ghost the author and giver of life? Is he not the source and spring of every thing spiritually good? Can there be one good thought, one holy desire, one right action without him? Who is it that renews and converts the sinner? Who convinces man of his lost estate as a transgressor? Who leads him to true repentance? Who separates him from the world? Who gives him the grace of faith? Who reveals to him the glory and mercy of Christ Jesus, leads him to his cross, and gives him the peace which flows from justification and acceptance through his blood? Who maintains and carries on the divine life which he first bestowed? Who imparts holiness and strength, victory over the world, love to God, and sincerity in our dedication of ourselves to his service? Is not the Eternal Spirit the sole author of all these blessings? Does not the promise of his grace stand in nearly the same relation to us, which the promise of the Messiah did to the fathers? Is not the New Testament "the dispensation of the Spirit?" Are not all our instructions an inert mass, to use the expression of a great divine, except as they are quickened into life by the Holy Ghost? Can a single benefit flow from our ministry, either as to the conversion of the ungodly or the edification of sincere Christians without his present agency? How highly then should we honour him in all our exertions! Let the world who know him not, esteem our zeal to be folly; let them charge us with unintelligible or enthusiastic flights of devotion; let them endeavour to confound our scriptural and temperate declarations with the mischievous reveries of the impostor; let them misinterpret and misrepresent, as

they have ever done, a doctrine which they do not love and cannot appreciate: it is enough for us to know, that "the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God." We must not be content with occasional references merely; we must take care that such a doctrine do not lie hid in obscurity through our fault. We must guard, indeed, against rash and unwarranted positions on this as well as on any other subject: we must carefully trace out the truth into its proper fruits and evidences, but we must never hesitate to speak openly and fully on the person and operations of the Spirit. We must magnify his influences. We must expect his presence. We must ourselves depend, and direct our hearers to depend, upon his inspiration. We must give Him the praise of all the good which he is pleased to produce. There are few points where we need more caution than on this. The doctrine slides insensibly from our recollection. We pray, we preach, we visit, we labour—little effect follows: we are surprised; but surely our astonishment would cease if we called to mind our neglect of that blessed Spirit of life, from whom alone all real efficiency proceeds. If we truly desire a revival amongst our parishioners, we must look for it by returning to the old scriptural truths of the Holy Ghost, by honouring his operations, and imploring more fervently and simply his mercy and power.

6. I have been carried to a greater length than I intended in the above remarks; but may I be permitted to add here, that in the view which I take of the low and deficient tone of religious sentiment which is now under consideration, I have frequently thought there is *a want of a distinct acknowledgment of the doctrine of the special grace of God*, in the strict sense of that term, as the origin of salvation to ruined sinners, the only source of every blessing, the spring of repentance, faith, obe-

dience, and everlasting life. The accountableness, indeed, of man; his obligation to the Divine law; the necessity of addressing him as a reasonable creature, and calling him to repent and believe the Gospel; the duty of repentance and faith; the inexcusableness of those who go on in impenitence and unbelief, and the final condemnation of the ungodly arising solely from their own sin and guilt, are truths of the very first magnitude. I need not here repeat the sense I entertain of the danger of any such representations of the impotency of man, or of the grace of God, as appear to weaken their force. But our explication of these primary truths, as well as of all the other parts of religion, must be connected with the clear and full exhibition of the doctrine of the grace of God. This must on no pretext be obscured or concealed. If we are not called on to *reconcile* all the various truths which are commonly supposed to be necessarily involved in this great point, we certainly are called on to *teach* them, so far as they are explicitly revealed in the holy Scriptures.

"By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "He hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace; and if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." "Blessed, be

the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

Such is the language of the unerring oracles of God, and such, in its proportion, should be the language of our discourses. I am fully ready to admit that expositions of some of the deeply mysterious truths connected with the above and similar passages are not essential to the Christian life and experience. That I do more than admit that they ought not to be rashly and excessively inculcated; that I consider such crude and unscriptural effusions as in the last degree pernicious; I have, I trust, sufficiently shewn in my former paper. But I do not stop here; I am ready further to allow that on many occasions—in the conduct, for instance, of a religious periodical miscellany like your own—there may be a propriety in not taking any decided part as to the particular explication of them, from a just consideration of the mischiefs of theological controversy, and from a recollection of the distinguished piety and learning which are ranged on each side of the question. All, therefore, that I would here contend for, is, that the above and similar passages as they stand in Holy Writ, ought to have their due place in our course of pastoral instruction; for this plain reason, that they are found to have a place in the inspired

records. In the first exposition, indeed, of the truths of Christianity to an uninformed congregation, let the discourses of the Apostles, in the Acts of the Apostles, be our model. But, on the same principle, when a considerable number of truly converted persons are to be gradually carried forward to the full reception of Divine truth, let the doctrine of the same Apostles, in their various Epistles, be the object of our strict imitation. Whatever place such passages as I have quoted occupy in the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, &c. and for whatever ends they are there employed, a similar place should they occupy for similar ends, so far as human infirmity will allow, in our own ministrations. The reason of man is not to be listened to, when it would conceal any part of the revelation of God. No one word of the Holy Spirit can ever be safely disregarded. All Divine declarations are not only true, but right; the very best possible of all statements, the dictate of eternal wisdom, mercy and righteousness. To be silent where God speaks, is as culpable as to speak where God is silent. The disposition, which I fear is common among the class of ministers whose sentiments I am considering, to dread the very mention of terms which abound in the holy Scriptures, is surely more than suspicious. But here I stop. The whole of what I would ask for on this branch of the subject is, a simple adherence to the language of inspiration, and to that alone, independently of all human comments. For with regard to the *minute exposition* of some of these particular truths, (I speak of those which relate to the Divine will), it is not always possible, it is seldom necessary—I may say, it is not even desirable, to attempt it. Even as to the *more general explication* of them, to which we may sometimes be called, the utmost caution is necessary, the utmost fear of

temerity as to ourselves, the most entire exercise of Christian charity towards others; for dogmatism and conceit are dangerous beyond conception here. We can scarcely go beyond the language of the Holy Ghost on such topics with any security.

But surely there is another part of the truths contained in the above and similar passages which stands on a widely different ground. The doctrine of the special favour and grace of God, as the only source of conversion and salvation, is quite exempt from all fair controversy. On this point it is our duty to speak out. We must not, we cannot, I think, conscientiously be indifferent. Whatever our particular views of the texts relating to the secret will of God may be, this fundamental truth, which lies on the very surface of the Scriptures, is to be openly and fully explained to our people. We may suspend our judgment on topics of abstruse and awful contemplation, but we must not suspend it on the great and commanding truth of the distinguishing grace of God.* This can no more be considered by a truly pious minister as a matter of debate, than the doctrine of the fall of man, or of the work of the Holy Ghost, with which it is inseparably connected. I need not say how much it is obscured in our day. I need not say how nearly many seem at times to approach the Semipelagian heresy. I think it very important for young divines to understand the bearings of the different parts of

* It is of little consequence for me to repeat here, what I professed in my former paper, my own firm belief in the doctrines of election and predestination to life. My wish is to separate the grand leading truth of Divine grace from the particular sentiments of different individuals on topics which, however conjoined with it in their own view of the subject, I would never represent as placed on the same footing with that essential doctrine of the grace of God which is admitted in common by every truly Christian divine.

this subject. I am sure we never can expect the blessing of God on our ministry, if the doctrine of his free favour and mercy is weakened or concealed. This great principle, thus separated from disputable tenets, has far more to do with every other part of evangelical truth than might at first sight be imagined. It gives the right tone to the whole. It stamps the real character of our ministry. It tends immediately and necessarily, when scripturally taught, to abase man as a sinner; to glorify God; to excite to penitence and prayer; to display the grace, and enlarge our views of the work and intercession, of our adorable Lord; to promote gratitude, humility, and obedience; to increase our sense of dependence on the Holy Ghost; to awaken hope, and joy, and love in our Christian walk; and to teach us in what strength we are to follow and obey our Saviour. The omission of it, on the contrary, tends, both in itself and in the disposition of mind to which it almost infallibly leads, to a covert but dangerous measure of pride and self-righteousness; to a dislike of strictly scriptural language on various important topics; to a misapprehension of the nature of the Gospel; to a reliance in some degree on our own power and strength; to an undervaluing of the influence of the Holy Spirit, and a general coldness in our love, gratitude, and obedience to God—not to mention that it gives too reasonable an occasion to excessive statements on the part of those who hold, as we conceive, high and disproportionate views of doctrinal truth. But I hasten from a subject on which I need not say I speak with great apprehension, from a knowledge of the misconception to which, from the truths with which it stands connected, I fear it will ever be peculiarly liable, in order to mention,

7. The defect which is, I conceive, commonly attached to those I have

already noticed, of *not insisting sufficiently on the Christian spirit and temper, the life of faith, and the duties of obedience.*—The standard of religious practice is closely connected with the standard of doctrine. The opposite errors of excessively high statements of religious truth, and excessively low, unite, as extremes are frequently found to do, in this respect. They both tend to relax the obligations of duty, and lower the tone of genuine feeling. They both introduce, from opposite quarters, so many allowances and concessions into their code of morals, as to weaken, in many important respects, the force of the Divine law as the rule of conduct, and the efficacy of evangelical principle as the source of obedience. We must ever recollect that the Gospel is a remedy for man; and this remedy loses all its effect except as it is made to bear on his disease. The Christian life is a course of holy faith, spiritual communion with God, tender circumspection, and unreserved devotedness. It delivers from the world; it unites to Christ; it begins in a new and heavenly birth, and leads on to increasing degrees of conformity to God. We are brought back to God by the gift of justifying grace, in order that we may receive the “spirit of adoption, crying, Abba, Father.” We are “delivered from the hands of our enemies, that we may serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.” Sanctification, in all the amplitude of the term, is the invariable concomitant, the necessary effect, and the only satisfactory evidence of justification through the obedience unto death of the Son of God. We cannot, indeed, be too considerate and encouraging in addressing the young or oppressed penitent, and we must always have compassion on those who are overtaken in a fault, and restore them in the spirit of meekness. But we

must not, we dare not, decline from the truth of the Gospel. Practical religion is, after all, the main difficulty with such corrupt creatures as we are. We soon forget our highest duties; those of the heart, and spirit, and temper; our walk with God, and our love to man. We forget that religion is not a speculation, a sentiment, a profession, but a new life, the inhabitation of God through the Spirit. This high and ennobling principle is not to be frittered away by distinctions and refinements; it is not to be brought down to the worldly estimate of an enfeebled Christianity; it is not to be compromised or enervated by the tame dictates of a spurious prudence. It teaches us now, if we are true Christians, as it did those in the days of the Apostles, to “deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.” It leads us to “put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering.” It bids us to “come out from the world, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing.” It plainly warns us that “the friendship of the world is enmity with God: whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God.” The class of ministers to whom we are now directing our attention, have need of the utmost vigilance on this point. All the efficiency of their instructions must vanish, if they allow their people to make a mistake here; if they permit them to imagine that habits of self-indulgence and indolence, of worldly company and amusements, of ostentation and vanity, of ease and sensuality on the one hand—or of evil tempers and passions, of slander and malice, of party-spirit and caprice, of conceit and obstinacy on the other—are consistent with a state of scriptural religious profession. On the contrary, the maintenance of a high standard of

piety and obedience, notwithstanding the spirit of the times in which we live, is as essential a part of our doctrine, if we would expect the grace and blessing of God's Holy Spirit, if we would adorn the Gospel, or promote the salvation and edification of the church, as any other branch of the great subject which we are destined to unfold.

8. I might here conclude the remarks which I have ventured with unfeigned diffidence to offer, if it did not appear to me that the design of them would be incompletely accomplished, were I not to add that many of the respectable and pious persons whom I have in view seem *not sufficiently to have entered into the magnitude and comprehension of the scheme of Christianity generally, as a revelation of the unutterable love of God in saving sinners by the gift of Jesus Christ.*—Some allusion has been made to this subject under the fourth head; but I here consider it in a far wider view. I then regarded it as a topic, I now resume it as the sum of Christianity. Many, if not all the errors of a low system of religious truth, arise from not having the mind filled and enlarged with this astonishing theme, which is the characteristic and distinguishing glory of the Bible, that "God hath so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." The entire volume of Revelation centres in this point. The doctrine of God in Christ Jesus reconciling the world unto himself, embraces in effect every other. The Old Testament prefigured and foretold this surprising mercy, as the New reveals and expounds it. It is impossible that our ministry should be scriptural or successful, if we lose sight of this grand and controlling subject which inspires the whole revelation of Heaven. A multitude of minor principles, diffi-

cult to be understood and felt separately; a detail of systematic tenets, though ever so accurate; the inculcation, however sincere, of dependent and secondary questions; never did, never will convert mankind. It is utterly impracticable to exhibit these aright, to give them their due place, or employ them for their legitimate ends, if the commanding discovery of salvation by the grace of God in an incarnate Saviour be not well understood as the main revelation of Divine Mercy to a ruined world. The ignorance and depravity of our fallen nature operate in general more against the truths of revealed than of natural religion. And it is to be expected that they should most especially oppose the vast plan of redemption in Christ Jesus. It is for this reason that the point I am now insisting on is continually in danger of being lost in the church, and, with it, the simplicity and grandeur of Christianity, the just apprehension of God's leading design in Revelation, the high and comprehensive ends of enlightened instruction. Let this lofty conception of religion once possess the heart by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, and our views of all the particulars of which this great truth consists, or with which it is allied, will assume their just bearing and position, as well as be attended with a new force. We shall direct our efforts to what ought to be their grand aim, the accomplishment of God's purposes of salvation in Christ Jesus. We shall feel the unity and magnitude of our object. A larger measure of the grace of the blessed Spirit will rest on our labours. The previous truths to which I have adverted will break with clearer light and juster harmony upon our view. We shall dwell on them with a new propriety and earnestness, with greater warmth of affection and greater purity of zeal. The low and defective scheme of religion, occupied

tamely and inefficiently about limited topics only, will yield to a better state of feeling and a more enlarged apprehension of truth. Our statements will be plain and nervous, addressed to the conscience and heart, in "the demonstration of the Spirit and of power." We shall neither be worldly and temporizing instructors on the one hand, nor angry and prejudiced controversialists on the other, but standing on the broad footing of scriptural truth, filled with its stupendous discoveries in Christ Jesus, and entering into the unspeakable love of God in Him, we shall discharge the ministry of reconciliation with the elevated and holy purpose of "saving our own souls and those that hear us;" of "being pure from the blood of all men;" of "pleasing not men but God, which searcheth the heart;" of "being instant in season, out of season, in delivering our message of mercy;" only solicitous to obtain at last, through the grace of our Saviour, that transporting plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." D. W.

FAMILY SERMONS. No. LXXVII.

Prov. xii. 26.—*The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour.*

MEN without religion will sometimes ask, "Do not all men sin—do not even those whom you admit to be religious, and to be in a safe state, break the commandments of God? And, if so, is not the whole difference between them and ourselves, that our offences are somewhat more numerous than theirs? But can this difference alone be a sufficient ground for excusing the one class and condemning the other—for thinking that the one will be everlastingly happy, and the other everlastingly miserable?"

Now it must unquestionably be ad-

mitted, that not only the irreligious, but the righteous, sin against God. Still, whatever may be the resemblance upon this point, it is nevertheless true, that men with and without religion differ in many other most important particulars, and in particulars which fully justify us, upon the principles of the Bible, in concluding the one to be in the path to happiness, and the other in the path to misery.—It will be my humble endeavour, in the following discourse, to shew some of the points in which the sins or offences of the good and of the bad differ; and may God enable us faithfully to apply the subject to ourselves!

1. The first difference between the sins of the religious and the irreligious man is, that the *one does not allow himself in his sins, and the other does*.—The real Christian never says, "I know such an action to be wrong, but yet I will do it—I know such an action to be right, but yet I will neglect to do it." But in the other class of men we shall be often struck with the contrary line of conduct. Charge them with their neglect of God, and of their souls, and they say, perhaps, "We confess it to be wrong." And yet they habitually pursue the same practices, and this without any uneasiness of conscience. Here, then, surely there is a manifest and most important distinction between the two classes of characters. For, consider the case as between man and man. We may conceive the affectionate child surprised into an act of disobedience or unkindness to the parent whom it loves; but we cannot conceive that child, if truly affectionate, setting itself *deliberately* and *knowingly* to wound that parent at the tenderest point—resolutely to disobey his injunctions, or to resist his wishes. And thus in religion. In the one case, an act of disobedience discovers a man in whom, though the flesh is weak, the spirit may be willing—in whom a momentary temptation has

prevailed over the settled purpose and desire of his heart. In the other, you have a man whose settled purpose is to do wrong—in whom this particular act only fulfils the general intention of the mind—in whom the conduct is merely the corrupt index of a corrupt mind. And here let us anxiously ask ourselves to which of these classes do we belong? Is our fixed and habitual purpose, wish, desire, to do the whole will of God? Disregarding the opinions of the world, and the corrupt wishes of our own fallen hearts, do we take up the Bible and say, "By the grace of God, I will endeavour to comply with whatever commandment I find there?" If not, we want this feature in the character of a real Christian; and it is a want, I must venture to say, decisive of our state *here*, and, without a change of heart and conduct, decisive of our condition in eternity. The language of a true Christian must be that of his Master: "I come to do thy will, O God."

2. A second distinction between a real Christian and one who is not a real Christian, is this—the real Christian *does not seek or find his happiness in sin*.—A man who is not really religious, if he wants amusement, or relaxation, or indulgence, seeks for it, generally, either in the society of men without religion, or in practices which the word of God condemns. He sins, and it gives him no pain. He sees others sin around him, and it gives him no pain. He can derive his pleasures from occurrences which must offend the holy eye of God. On the contrary, the real Christian finds no happiness in sin. Temptation may surprise him into a single act of sin, but cannot surprise him into the love of it. His happiness "lies hid with God." His treasure is in heaven. He loves to soar above this world of clouds and tempests into the eternal sunshine of the Divine presence—to let loose his imagina-

tion on the glories of the invisible world—upon the perfections of God—upon the unspeakable love of Christ, and the happiness of his true servants in heaven. His pleasure is in prayer, in communion with God, in the possession of that holy calm, that elevating hope, that spirit of thankfulness, and confidence, and love to God and Christ, which are the exclusive fruits of religion. His heart sickens as he contemplates the sins of his fellow-creatures. To derive pleasure from their offences is, in his judgment, no less impossible than to derive it from seeing a fellow-creature nailed to a cross, or racked on a wheel. He, in fact, seeks his happiness in the field of his duties. "O," says he, "how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day." "How sweet are thy words unto my taste; yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" Here, then, we have, I conceive, another most important distinction between these two classes. The state and character of any person may to a great extent be judged by the nature of his pleasures. Does he seek them in trifles? he is a trifling man:—does he seek them in worldly pursuits? he is a worldly man:—does he seek them in vice? he is a vicious man:—does he seek them in God and Christ? he is a Christian. Let us, then, endeavour honestly and conscientiously to bring ourselves to this test. What are our pleasures?—Do we find them in breaking the Sabbath; in neglecting the Saviour; in those occupations which, if grief can enter heaven, must fill with grief and hallowed indignation even its happy spirits, and interrupt their heavenly melody with many a discordant note? Is it to God we draw near, as the Author of our peace and joy—do we refuse to taste of those pleasures in which angels might not in a sense participate? Such, I conceive, is the character of the true servant of God. And the language of one of

these holy men best illustrates that character: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to dwell in his temple."

3. Thirdly, the *habits of a real Christian are holy*.—Men are not to be judged by a few solitary actions of their lives. There is scarcely any life so dark as not to be lighted up by a few brighter actions—as a single star may glimmer through the most cloudy atmosphere; and there is no life so bright, as not to be darkened by many spots—as many small clouds are apt to checquer even the clearest sky. But then we determine the real state of the heavens not by the single star, in the one case, or by the few clouds in the other. We ask, what is the general aspect, the prevalent appearance: does night or day, does shade or sunshine, prevail? Thus also must we proceed in estimating the character of men. we must not judge them by a few solitary acts which the greatness of temptation, on the one hand, or the absence of temptation, on the other, may produce. It is the habitual frame of the mind—it is what we may call the work-day character—it is the general, habitual, prevalent temper, conduct, conversation, in the family, or the parish; in the shop, or the farm; which are the only true tests of our condition. We must no more judge them by single instances than we would call the field foul in which a single thistle was found, or fertile because it produced a single ear of corn. But let us bring the two classes to this standard, and we shall find that in the real Christian the *habits* are holy—in the insincere Christian they are unholy; that the one is habitually right, and accidentally wrong; and the other habitually wrong, and accidentally right. Such, then, is another highly important distinction between these classes; may God en-

able us to decide to which class we belong! To this end let us examine ourselves; always remembering, however, that, in self-examination we are liable to a double error upon this very point. In looking at our virtues, we are apt to mistake our single acts for our fixed habits; and in looking at our faults, to mistake our fixed habits for single acts. A grain of wheat has fallen among the chaff, and the examiner treasures up that, and produces it as a sort of sample of the whole. But, let us examine and *prove* ourselves more carefully and effectually. Let us not live in that state of self-ignorance in which we shall be compelled to hear our sins first proclaimed by the dreadful trumpet which summons us to judgment or dismisses us to perdition.

4 Fourthly, every act of sin in real Christians is *followed by sincere repentance*.—No feature is more essentially and invariably characteristic of a holy mind, than a feeling of deep penitence for transgression. Job and David were men high in the favour of God; men, as it would seem, of different character, and placed in very different circumstances, yet both appear to have been touched by precisely the same penitential feelings. "I abhor myself," said the "perfect and upright" Job, "and repent in dust and ashes." "My sin," said the "man after God's own heart," "is ever before me." And thus is it with every sincere Christian. His tenderness of conscience is of such rapid growth, as even to outstrip every other religious quality: and though there is every day less to condemn in himself, he seems to discover more. Men find him depressed, perhaps, and, wondering, ask the cause. His wonder and grief are, that others are not distressed as well as himself. When they chance to see him, perhaps he has just convicted himself of some act of disobedience to his God and Benefactor: and, if so,

such tears are holy tears; and they that "sow in these shall reap in joy:" they that "go forth bearing this seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them." And such alone must expect to reap of this heavenly harvest. And here in this point alone, is a sufficiently broad line between the characters of the religious and irreligious, a sufficient distinction as to the hopes of their acceptance with God. Without penitence no fallen creature can enter into heaven: "Except ye repent, ye must perish." Without penitence, we are not the weary and heavy laden to whom the promises of the Gospel are addressed. The dew of Divine mercy slides off, as it were, from the heights of pride and self-sufficiency into the low valleys of humility and self-condemnation.—The promises of God apply to that poor man who does not venture to lift up his eyes to God; who, in one corner of the temple, unseen by any eye, perhaps, but that of God, offers a humble supplication to his God and Saviour—"Jesus, Master, have mercy on me." His penitence and faith are the features by which such a man is known to God—the qualities which prepare him for heaven. Such is the mark stamped on the forehead of apostles and martyrs—the seal by which the faithful are sealed. God himself stamps it upon the soul; and will, at the day of judgment, recognise his own mark, and admit those who bear it to the joy of their Lord.

5. A fifth no less important feature, by which the real Christian is distinguished, is, that he *anxiously seeks the pardon of his sins through Jesus Christ*.—Others may, in a sense, partake with him in his regret for having done wrong. But he alone diligently seeks forgiveness through his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Others too often seem to imagine their sins cancelled immediately upon their bare and cold ac-

knowledgment of them. He, on the contrary, knows that the hatred of sin, and indignation of the sinner, must be deeply lodged in a mind of infinite purity. He cannot believe, therefore, that even a light sin is a matter of little moment; that a mere confession is to wipe it out: and discovering in the Gospel, in the death of the Son of God for the sins of the world, a wonderful and most merciful provision for the rescue of the penitent sinner, he fixes his eyes upon the cross of Christ, and, prostrate at its foot, seeks pardon in the name of the great intercessor. Other men, by a mischievous delusion, fancy that the storm of Divine anger is calmed as soon as raised; and conjure up, in imagination, around themselves, although impenitent, a sky bright with the rays of Divine favour and love. He sees that sky as it really is, dark with the clouds of eternal wrath, till brightened by the rising of the star of Bethlehem. That star he sees, and follows it to the presence of his Lord. There he seeks peace, and he finds it. And his consolation is this—not that he can save himself, but that "he has an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

6. The sixth, and last point of distinction which I shall have time to notice between the real Christian and every other character is, that he alone *seeks diligently from God a power to abstain from sin in future*.—If others even desire the pardon of their past sins, they are careless about future advancement in holiness—about such a change of nature as may prevent the repetition of their offences, and may bring them nearer to the Divine image. They, perhaps, persist in a course of sinning and repenting, through the whole stage of their lives. Heaven is every day mocked by the language of an unmeaning sorrow. No real hatred for the sin is felt—no anxious desire is manifested to present to the holy

eye of God a life of more unsullied holiness—an image reflecting more rays of the character of our heavenly Father.—In the Christian a different feeling prevails. A deep abhorrence of sin mingles with his regret for it. His are tears of hatred as well as grief. He knows that the Holy Spirit is pledged to the assistance of the devout worshipper—that he can renew the heart—that he can dry up with his holy fire the fountain of our crimes—or cherish by his presence the slow growth of a new nature, of our infant resolutions and desires. Low on his bended knees he anxiously seeks this new nature; nor does he love to rise till he feels the present God—till he can go forth fortified with heavenly strength, and “clothed in the whole armour of God.”—Here, also, I must be permitted to ask, is this your own state of mind? I ask not merely what is your regret for your past misconduct, but what are your daily advances in religion? What sins do you put away? How far are you diligently seeking the grace of your God, who is able to perceive that you are daily putting off your old nature, and putting on a new and heavenly nature? No man, who is in earnest about heaven, ought to feel satisfied with being that to-day which he was a month before.

Here I close my observations on the substantial distinction between a real Christian and every other character. I think you will agree with me, that it is strongly marked—that the distinction which is to be a broad gulf in eternity, which is to be measured out and defined for ever by the vast interval between heaven and hell, is something more than a mere line or shadowy difference here.

There is but a single observation which I should wish to offer in conclusion. If we carefully observe the several points of distinction which I have noticed, we shall find that they imply in the two classes of charac-

ters, in each particular instance, a *different state of heart or mind*. The will of the one does not consent to sin—that of the other does: the taste of the one is not gratified by sin—that of the other is: the one grieves for sin, is anxious for pardon through Christ, and desirous of amendment by the influences of the blessed Spirit—the other is not. Now all these differences imply a different state of mind, of heart, of affections. In other words, the one man has a renewed and sanctified heart—the other has not: the one is spiritually born again, or converted—the other is not: the one is in a state of nature or natural corruption—the other is not. Need I say, then—to whichever of these classes we belong—what is our obvious and imperative duty? Need I tell you where alone our wants can be supplied? If we are without religion, we need an entire change of heart. If religious, we still need more and more of the supply of the Spirit of God, both to sustain us at our present point, and to carry us higher. Let us cast ourselves, then, upon God. Let us be persuaded that the evil is not to be eradicated, nor the good to be maintained or increased, by mere changes or reforms of the outward conduct. Let us seek a new and more sanctified nature; more and more of the influences of the Sacred Spirit. In the fable of old, when the artist had made the figure of a man, he could not animate it without stealing fire from heaven. That heavenly fire is offered to us. Many has it already quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. At the day of judgment the bones of the saints, every where dispersed or loosened into dust, shall be collected, arranged, and formed, and animated into man. Let us call upon God, then, now to begin the work on ourselves—to breathe upon the inanimate members of our fallen nature; to bid these dead bones live; to stamp

us with his own sacred image.— Let us not be content to grovel here, when we may rise to the excellences and privileges of angels. Let us not live for this world when a merciful Saviour is calling us to the

happiness of heaven. Let us say rather, "I have been guilty and wretched long enough. O God have mercy upon me! Let me live the life of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

MISCELLANEOUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

It is impossible that a single individual among the readers of the Christian Observer can be indifferent to any information connected with the subject of the African Slave Trade. The pages of your publication have, from time to time, been devoted to a faithful register of every important document which may tend to expose in its true colours this unprincipled and cruel traffic. I shall, therefore, make no apology for transmitting the following interesting extract, from one of the works of that enlightened philosopher *M. Humboldt*, which has recently been translated into English.

G. C. G.

"If the situation of our house at Cumana was highly favourable for the observation of the stars and meteorological phenomena, it obliged us to be sometimes the witnesses of afflicting scenes in the day. A part of the great square is surrounded with arcades, above which is one of those long wooden galleries which are common in warm countries. This was the place where slaves, brought from the coast of Africa, were sold. Of all the European governments, Denmark was the first, and for a long time the only power, that abolished the trade: *notwithstanding which, the first Negroes we saw exposed for sale had been landed from a Danish slave ship.* What are the duties of humanity, national honour, or the laws of his country, to a man stimulated by the speculations of sordid interest?

"The slaves exposed to sale were young men from fifteen to twenty years of age. Every morning cocoa-nut oil was distributed among them with which they rubbed their bodies to give their skin a black polish. The persons who came to purchase examined the teeth of these slaves, to judge of their age and health; *forcing open their mouths as we do those of horses in a market.* This degrading custom dates from Africa, as is proved by the faithful picture, which, in one of his dramatic pieces,* Cervantes, released from his long captivity among the Moors, has drawn of the sale of the Christian slaves at Algiers. It is distressing to think that, even at this day, there exists European colonists in the West Indies *who mark their slaves with a hot iron, to know them again if they escape.* This is the treatment bestowed on those, who save other men the trouble of sowing, tilling, and reaping, in order to live.†

* *El Trato de Argel. Jorn. II. (Viage al Parnasso, 1784, p. 316.)*

† *La Bruyere, Caractères, chap. xi. (ed. 1765, p. 300.)*—I wish to cite at length a passage in which the love of the human species is drawn with force, or rather with noble severity. "We find, under the torrid zone, certain wild animals, male and female, scattered through the country, black, livid, and all over scorched by the sun, bent to the earth which they dig and turn up with invincible perseverance. They have something like an articulate voice; and, when they stand up on their feet, they exhibit a human face, and IN FACT THESE CREATURES ARE MEN!"

"The greater the impression which the first sale of Negroes made on us, the more we congratulated ourselves on living among a people, and on a continent, where this sight is rare, and where the number of slaves is in general inconsiderable. The number in 1800 did not exceed 6000 in the two provinces of Cumana and Barcelona, when at the same period the whole population was estimated at 110,000 inhabitants. The trade in African slaves, which the Spanish laws have never favoured, is almost nothing on coasts where the trade in American slaves was carried on in the sixteenth century with a desolating activity. Macarapan, anciently called Amacarapana, Cumana, Araya, and particularly New Cadiz, built on the islet of Cubagua, might then be considered as commercial establishments to facilitate the trade. Girolamo Benzoni of Milan, who at the age of twenty-two years had gone over to Terra Firma, took part in some expeditions made in 1542 to the coasts of Bordones, Cariaco, and Paria, to carry off the unfortunate natives. He relates with simplicity, and often with a sensibility not common in the historians of that time, the examples of cruelty of which he was a witness. He saw the slaves dragged to New Cadiz, *to be marked on the forehead and on the arms*, and to pay the *quint* to the officers of the crown. From this port the Indians were sent to the island of Hayti, or St. Domingo, after having often changed masters, not by way of sale, but because *the soldiers played for them at dice*."*—HUMBOLDT'S *Personal Narrative*, Vol. ii. pp. 245—248.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THERE is obviously much difference of opinion among mankind. And, to a certain extent, it is well to acquiesce in this difference, partly be-

* Benzoni, *Hist. del Mondo Nuovo*, 1565, pp. 4, 7, 9.

cause it leads to no evil consequence—partly because complete agreement cannot be hoped for—and partly because an attempt to correct these varieties of opinion cannot be made without even greater danger to charity than is incurred by leaving things as they are. So that although, wherever men differ, *one* party must almost necessarily be wrong, it is a wise rule of conduct to expect and to allow of these discrepancies upon immaterial points. And, above all, it is our bounden duty not to suffer this or any difference of sentiment to impair our mutual charity and affection. But, then, is there not a point at which this license to differ should cease? Let us listen to the language of Scripture:—"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Now in this instance, a difference of opinion is evidently of the highest importance. And there may be many other such cases. I have thought, therefore, that it might not be an uninteresting employment to many of your readers to endeavour to ascertain some of the points in which concordance of opinion is essential, and also to discover some of the causes from which discordance of opinion upon important points ordinarily arises. I shall be sincerely happy if the few observations upon these two topics in the paper I send you may serve, in the smallest degree to assist such an inquiry.

What, then, are the points on which unity of opinion is essential?

In the first place, men must agree in receiving the great leading truths of religion. For such is the declaration of the Bible. Upon the necessity of repentance, for instance, it says—"Except ye repent, ye must all likewise perish." Upon conversion by the Holy Spirit—"Except ye are converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Upon the necessity of holi-

ness—"Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Upon faith in Christ—"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." As to all these great truths, therefore—as to the necessity of repentance, of conversion by the Spirit of God, of holiness, of faith in Christ—taking these words in their scriptural meaning, men must "be of one mind." For, not to admit these truths, is to relinquish our hopes of heaven.—Here, therefore, is a point at which all latitudinarianism, all indifference, all, falsely so called, liberality, all cold and careless license of opinion must cease. Where opinions stand upon the authority of man, it may be lawful to differ—but not where God is the instructor, and where the things taught are of the first importance, and are distinctly revealed. An error as to faith, to conversion, to repentance or holiness, generally speaking, is a *crime*; because God must be supposed to teach a truth of vital importance in such a manner as that all responsible creatures may receive it.

Again: men ought to be agreed as to the necessity of possessing those tempers and dispositions which arise out of the fundamental principles of religion. "If any man," say the Scriptures, "have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "The carnal mind is enmity against God." "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace." "To be carnally minded is death; to be spiritually minded is life and peace." And there would obviously be no difficulty in multiplying quotations to prove that there are certain dispositions by which every true servant of God will be marked—as to which they will all be agreed—as to which all must lament their deficiencies, and for which all must labour and pray.

—Here, again, therefore, no difference of opinion can be allowed. It is not a matter of doubt whether we should or should not be spiritually minded; meek, mild, affectionate, zealous, benevolent, devout. We must not content ourselves, as to these points, with saying, "Such is *his* opinion—and such is *mine*." We must here be of one mind—of the same mind with the great Author of truth—with the God of our salvation.

Again, we must be agreed as to the *general course of practice which flows from the principles of the Gospel*.—The practice of a Christian, though not minutely, is yet strongly and decisively delineated in Scripture. All the great lines are broadly laid down:—"Finally, my brethren," says St. Paul to the Philippians, "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report—if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Thus also St. Peter—"Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another—love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous—not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing."—In this case, then, we must also be agreed. Having determined from the Bible what sin is, we must have no difference of opinion on the duty of avoiding and hating it. There is no difference of sentiment on such points in heaven, and none must be allowed here. Upon whatever subordinate topics Christians may unhappily differ, they must unite in settled, deadly, persevering hate to all that is called sin in the Bible. Candour must not be stretched to applaud or to tolerate vice. All must feel themselves solemnly pledged, as they value God and salvation, to resist in themselves, or to check, by every allowed method, in others, the growth and prevalence of sin—whether in the throne, or in the cot-

tage—in our homes or in our country—in whatever spot of creation crimes may be perpetrated, God may be offended, or souls be lost.

Such, then, I venture to think is a not inaccurate, however imperfect statement of the points in which all men, at least within the pale of Christianity, must be of one mind. Harmony as to all points is indeed most desirable—is a pleasure, a privilege, and a duty—but as to these points, error is criminal, and difference of opinion is, as to one at least of the differing parties, full of danger.

But such being the case, is it not a melancholy fact that so much and such wide difference of opinion should prevail in the world; a difference extending to the most important points. Your readers will excuse me, if I now proceed to point out, what I conceive to be, some of the causes of this discordance.

The first I will name is *carelessness*.—Truths may be strong, may be plain, may be infinitely important; and yet, through carelessness and indifference, men may fail to receive or apprehend them. And I need scarcely say how common such negligence is in the most important concerns. Men who honestly and eagerly give their minds to other pursuits are yet careless of the things of God. They too often slumber over these—or take them for granted when they should “search for them as for hid treasure.” It is worthy of observation, that the whole of the instructions of our blessed Saviour are so constructed as to demand and to reward the pious diligence of the student. “Without a *parable*,” it is said, “spake he not unto them.” He taught them, that is, only by those figures which the careless were likely to mistake, and the diligent and humble were almost sure to apprehend. If, then, we are wanting in a serious desire and endeavour to understand the truth, it is not to be wondered at that we are

of discordant opinions. The diligent and the careless are likely to come to opposite conclusions. For God opens the eyes of the one, and closes those of the other. He turns the bright side of the pillar to one, and the dark to the other.

A second cause of difference of opinion is I conceive *vanity* or *presumption*.—It is the will of God, not that his creatures should discover truth by the light of their own reason, but by the Bible, and by the light poured by his Spirit upon the mind of the diligent inquirer. If a man therefore be negligent of prayer and of the Scriptures, it is next to impossible that he should either know the truth, or agree with those who do. And yet how few persons read the Scriptures and pray with the diligence which becomes them! We find in conversing with multitudes upon the most important subjects, that they set up some different rule and standard from the word of God—that they follow the custom of the world, or some of those ordinary maxims which suit their own convenience. We find that prayer is either entirely neglected or carelessly performed—that the moments of retirement and communion with God are rare indeed—that business or self-indulgence are suffered to occupy the time which should be dedicated to God. How then can it be expected that such persons should become acquainted with the truth—how can they be expected to agree with the diligent and devout student. Let us suppose one of the “wise men” (no longer wise) when it pleased God to light up a star to guide them to the infant Saviour, had resolved to discover him by the mere powers of vision, or by the discoveries of philosophy. These would never have conducted him to the stable and the manger. And, therefore, whilst his brethren would have discovered the Lord, he must have failed in the object of his pursuit. And thus shall it be with all those

who "lean upon their own understanding." It is the star of heaven which can alone guide us to God. From a forgetfulness of this truth, the most learned men often fail to discover the simplest truths in religion—"I am wiser than my teachers," says David, "because I love thy law." And by the recognition of this truth, the simplest minds have often penetrated into the deepest recesses of religion. They have not foolishly endeavoured to substitute the lamp of science for the Sun of truth—but have heard, and have acted upon the promise, "When He, the Comforter, is come, he shall guide you into all truth."

A third cause of error and difference of opinion is *prejudice*.—By prejudice is meant—belief without evidence or proof. Many, for instance, without judging for themselves, are content to take up the doctrines of their fathers. They do not remember the time when they deliberately and anxiously sought for truth—when they made it their own—when they said, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that he is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." Often should we ask ourselves—"Have we no prejudices which prevent our agreeing with those who agree with the Bible—prejudices of education—prejudices derived from the society or from the age in which we live? Are we seeking the truth with a simple eye, and with an unbiassed heart?"

A fourth cause of discordancy of opinion is, I conceive, *the love of novelty and change*.—Nothing can be more affecting to the lover of union and harmony, than the eagerness with which the multitude desire change and follow what is new. And this, I presume to say, is to a considerable extent the character of our own days. The habit of the day, in many instances at least—and it is a habit not less deplored by many thinking Dissenters than by

the ministers of the Establishment—is to follow a variety of teachers—to desire change—to mistake the emotion caused by some new instructor for real progress in religion. And this is too often the case with that part of a congregation upon whom an affectionate and zealous pastor hopes that he may chiefly rely. I mean those who are most interested in religion.

I will detain your readers only to state one other and the principal cause of want of agreement in religion: I mean, *the love of sin*.—A bad life necessarily leads to a corrupt faith. "They love darkness," said our Lord, "because their deeds are evil." Men naturally close their eyes upon principles which condemn their own practice. "Were I a believer," said a noted infidel, "I would live infinitely better than you Christians live." Pascal replies justly to such an objector—"live better than we Christians live, and you will soon be a believer." To this effect was the declaration of Christ himself—"If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." He who lives up to the light he has, will obtain a larger effusion of light and grace from above.

Having made these few observations on the subject which I proposed to notice, I cannot persuade myself to conclude, without one or two additional remarks.

If, as I have been endeavouring to shew, it is the object of religion to persuade men to be of one mind, then how unjustly do those deal with religion who consider it as a source of discord and contention! It is true, that there have been wars professedly for a religious object. But such wars have generally been undertaken for a worldly object under a religious pretext. It is true, also, that there is much contention between different sects in religion. But then this, generally speaking, arises not from religion but from a

want of religion. The language of religion is—"Those who take the sword shall perish by the sword;"—and what ever be the side on which we fight, he must be wrong who loses his temper. The character, the genius, the spirit of the Gospel is love, is union with God and with one another. It speaks of God as an universal Father;—of the world as one vast family;—of Christ as having shed his blood to unite this great family—to unite them to God and to one another—to graft them like branches into the same stock—to pen them like sheep in the same fold—to infuse into them that new nature by which they may become one with Him, and one with God.—We can indeed, in this fallen world, but imperfectly judge of the exact character of the Divine dispensations. If we would know what is the final result designed by God—we should lift our eyes to heaven, where the full consequences of the Divine dispensations are seen, where their work is done, their triumphs are celebrated. And in heaven all is union—"no passion touches a discordant string." The principles, objects, tastes, are all the same. In the chorus of the universe no voice is silent, and one song employs them all—"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain." Even the multitude which "no man can number" have no diversity of pursuit, or discordancy of feeling—all cast their crowns before the same throne, worship the same Lord, and rend the concave of heaven with one harmonious shout. Such is religion where its full effects are seen, where its full harvests are reaped, and where man no longer scatters among them the tares of human corruption.

I have, sir, but one more remark to offer. If it be the tendency of the religion of Christ to produce union, then may we who profess this religion endeavour to display a spirit of concord in our own conduct, and to cultivate it in those

around us. And let us begin by cultivating a spirit of union in the worship of God. O what a glorious sight would it be to God and angels, if in uttering the same devout words, we all breathed the same spirit, and felt the same love! How would such prayers, like the congregated strength of an army, assail the gate of heaven, and take it by that holy violence and force to which a gracious God opposes no resistance! Nor would such union in religion terminate in itself. It would gradually insinuate itself into the circumstances of our daily life, and produce union upon other points. It would gradually, under the Divine blessing, destroy selfishness, irritability, and suspicion, and make us love our neighbour as ourselves. Soon we might hope to see substituted, for the lean and hollow language of ceremony and politeness, the honest language of warm and affectionate hearts. O then may we endeavour, that in one place at least, the ancient testimony to religion may be repeated, "See how these Christians love one another!" "O may the same mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus!" who became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, for a guilty and miserable world. May we be thus ready to suffer for the good of others! May we remember the declaration of the disciple whom Jesus loved, and who best perpetuated his spirit and character to the world! "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

C.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

You were so obliging as to notice a small publication which lately appeared, respecting the Waldenses, in which it was said that they are in distress, and that a Committee would be formed for the purpose of applying any sums of money that might be offered for

their relief. It is due to those benevolent persons who may have intended to contribute to the alleviation of their sufferings, to state, *in the first place*, that in consequence of a private letter from the Vallies to the respectable Minister of a French Protestant Church in London, a collection was made in that church, and amongst the minister's friends, so that about 100*l* was transmitted to Piedmont;—*in the next place*, that efforts have been made, and will in the proper time and way be continued, with a view to recover a subsidy which the Waldenses have lost;—and, *lastly*, that it is not expedient to receive or transmit sums of money to them until affairs on the Continent present a new aspect, since the Vallies of Piedmont form one of the passages from France into Italy, and may be therefore thrown into a very unsettled condition in consequence of the military operations in those countries.

When the present difficulties are removed, it is hoped that means will be found to preserve their schools from decay, &c. that so the light of Christian truth, which has for so many ages illumined those Vallies, may not be at length extinguished.

S.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THE practice of driving stage-coaches and other such vehicles on the Sabbath-day, which is become so common, not only in the metropolis, but all parts of the kingdom, is certainly a most daring offence against the laws both of God and man. Of the former, I presume, there can be no dispute; since we are forbidden, in the strongest and plainest terms, not only to work ourselves, but to suffer our *servants*, or our *cattle*, to labour on that sacred day of rest.

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But concerning the laws of the land, in this matter, some doubts, perhaps, may arise; because the word *coach* or *stage* does not occur in those Acts of Parliament which relate to the due observation of the Lord's-day. However, as they strictly forbid all *carriers, waggon-men, wain-men, &c.* travelling on that day, and enact "in general, that no tradesman, artificer, workman, labourer, or OTHER PERSON, shall do or exercise *any* worldly labour, business, or work of their ORDINARY CALLINGS, on the Lord's-day;" it follows undeniably, that the driving of stages, or the like, though not explicitly, is virtually disallowed and condemned by those laws. At the time when they were made, stage-coaches were not in use, therefore could not be specified; but as other carriages are not suffered to be driven on Sundays, the use of these is by evident implication forbidden. See 3d C. I. and 29th C. II. and by a later Act of 9th Anne, which licenses certain "hackney coachmen and chairmen within the bills of mortality," there is no exemption of *stages*, or other carriages of any sort; which surely would have been mentioned, had any such indulgence been intended.—Would it not be advisable, Mr. Editor, to recommend associations to be formed in all parts of the kingdom, for the discouraging, by every way and means, all those coaches which make it a constant rule to travel on that sacred day? Might not the members of such associations particularly countenance and support those coach-masters, &c. who should discontinue the practice of so profaning the Lord's-day? The very threat of forming such societies might be attended with a good effect. But I only drop this as a hint to be farther improved, should any of your readers or correspondents think the subject deserving notice.

THEOGNIS.

2 R

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

An Essay on the Character and practical Writings of St. Paul: By HANNAH MORE. 2 Vols. pp. 290 and 348. London: Cadell and Davies. 1815.

It was with peculiar satisfaction we found ourselves called upon, in the discharge of our critical duty, to examine the volumes which we are now to introduce to the notice of our readers. We felt encouraged to expect, from the name of their author, that our task would be grateful to others as well as to ourselves: nor could we approach, without emotions not easily defined, another production from the pen of a writer who has been edifying the public for nearly half a century; and whose debilitated state of health has suggested the painful apprehension, that in reviewing the latest of her works, we might possibly be reviewing her last.

Indeed, we cannot sufficiently admire that unwearied activity which will not allow this distinguished person to accept her discharge from a service in which she has done so much. If to have written much, and well, upon subjects of the highest interest; if to have presented the wisest lessons in the form most attractive to all classes of society, from the throne to the peasant; if to have stocked our shelves with volumes, in which good taste is associated with sound piety, just sentiment with devotional feeling, and classical refinement with didactic sagacity;—if performances like these could have satisfied her ardent mind, she might have quitted the field in the plenitude of her honours; and, in a state of well-earned repose, have awaited her removal from her retirement on earth, to an incorruptible inheritance in heaven.

Such would probably have been the case, had her conduct been influenced by no higher motive than that selfish and secular ambition which doats on human applause, and circumscribes its views by the limited circle of present or posthumous reputation. Warmed by that flame which is kindled at the sanctuary, and which animates its possessor to exertions of pure benevolence, she disdains a compromise with ease or with fame. Never thinking she has done enough for God and her fellow-creatures, while she retains the power of doing more; she seems resolved to fill up the measure of her usefulness, and to gild her declining years with the same lustre which surrounds the period of her health and strength.

Such were the impressions under which we took up the volumes before us; and a careful perusal of them has fully convinced us that Mrs. More runs no risk of impairing her reputation by adding to the number of her works. Time has in no degree debilitated her intellect, or clouded her imagination: her eye is not dim, nor is her natural force abated. The present, considered as a whole, is certainly a work of no ordinary merit; and there are portions of it, which, for vigorous thought, apt illustration, and just, yet glowing expression, may challenge comparison with the best and most finished of this author's compositions.

The subject of this "Essay" is judiciously chosen; and though the manner in which it is treated is not wholly original, it is sufficiently so to discriminate it from productions of a similar class, and to invest it with as much of the charm of novelty as may recommend it to general perusal. "The Portrait of St. Paul," as graphically sketch-

ed by the admirable La Flechere, besides being an unfinished performance, exhibits the Apostle systematically as "a model for Christians and pastors;" and the plan of Mr. La Flechere's undertaking was constructed with the express design, "that these two objects might be so closely united, as to fall under the same point of view." (Preface to Portrait.) There was room, therefore, for a work which might so generalize the subject, as to accommodate it to the use of Christians in every walk of life. And such is the object of Mrs. More.

On the importance of such a work, in a variety of views, it is not necessary to insist. In addition to usefulness in forming the Christian character, we cannot but highly estimate its direct tendency to rescue from misconception, and advance into deserved notice and estimation, one of the greatest characters that ever appeared on the stage of human action. To us it appears that no individual, certainly no one among the sacred writers, has been more ingeniously misrepresented, both by those who meant to exalt, and by those whose object it was to depreciate him, than the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Of his enemies some have, almost sacrilegiously, attacked himself as though but partially, or not at all inspired; and his writings, as they might have done the effusions of a heated enthusiast, or the deductions of an inconclusive reasoner. Others, without disputing his claims to inspiration, have entertained such confined notions of the purposes for which his Epistles were written, as to deem them merely local and temporary, and therefore of little value. On the other hand, the admirers of this Apostle have not always shewn their judgment, either in their manner of estimating his character or conducting his defence. It has been too much the custom, with many who profess to have learned their re-

ligion from the school of this Apostle to exhibit him as exclusively a doctrinist, and to cite and commend him in terms which would encourage the belief, that they considered him rather as the mere promulgator of a creed than a preceptor of the theory and the practice of Christianity. The consequence is (a consequence to which each party has, though with very different motives, contributed), that St. Paul has been defectively appreciated both as a teacher and an example; and his writings and his conduct have been abridged of that influence to which they were entitled in fixing the standard of truth and virtue. The author of these volumes has formed her conception of this distinguished Apostle, not from insulated circumstances in his history, or detached sentences in his Epistles; but from a connected view of the facts which constitute the former, and of the sentiments and feelings which are developed in the latter. She takes the gauge and dimensions of his character, and contemplates him under circumstances which put the highest and the lowest of his great qualities to the trial. In performing this task, she never loses sight of her professed object—the improvement of her reader; and it would be difficult to say, whether she most excels in the beauty of her drawing, or the wisdom of her reflections; in delineating the model, or persuading to the imitation of it.

But it is time we should enter upon a more particular examination of the volumes themselves. As St. Paul was a Christian and an Apostle, and every thing respecting him was to be sought for in the canon of Scripture: some preliminary steps appeared to be necessary, in order to possess the reader with a suitable conviction in favour of that system, on the truth and excellence of which the propriety of what was afterwards to be stated, would in great measure depend. With this

view the first chapter is devoted to the consideration of the defectiveness of Pagan morality, as evincing the necessity of a Divine Revelation. The existence of certain great qualities in the instances of individuals is admitted; but it is very justly contended, that the wisest of the heathens had no standard of a complete character. The following passage will shew the truth and the tendency of this observation:—

“The lives of their great men abound in splendid sayings, as well as heroic virtues, to such a degree, as to exalt our idea of the human intellect, and, in single instances, of the human character. We say, in single instances, for their idea of a perfect character wanted consistency, wanted completeness. It had many constituent parts, but there was no *whole* which comprized them. The moral fractions made up no integral. The virtuous man thought it no derogation from his virtue to be selfish, the conqueror to be revengeful, the philosopher to be arrogant, the injured to be unforgiving: forbearance was cowardice, humility was baseness, meekness was pusillanimity. Not only their justice was stained with cruelty, but the most cruel acts of injustice were the road to a popularity which immortalized the perpetrator. The good man was his own centre. Their virtues wanted to be drawn out of themselves, and this could not be the case. As their goodness did not arise from any knowledge, so it could not spring from any imitation of the Divine perfections. That inspiring principle, the love of God, the vital spark of all religion, was a motive of which they had not so much as heard; and if they had, it was a feeling which it would have been impossible for them to cherish, since some of the best of their deities were as bad as the worst of themselves.

“When the history of their own religion contained little more than the quarrels and the intrigues of these deities, could we expect that the practice of the people would be much better, or more consistent than their belief? If the divinities were at once holy and profligate, shall we wonder if the adoration was at once devout and impure? The worshipper could not commit a crime but he might vindicate it by the example of some deity; he could not

gratify a sinful appetite of which his religion did not furnish a justification.

“Besides this, all their scattered documents of virtue could never make up a body of morals. They wanted a connecting tie. The doctrines of one school were at variance with those of another. Even if they could have clubbed their opinions, and picked out the best from each sect, so as to have patched up a code, still the disciples of one sect would not have submitted to the leader of another, the system would have wanted a head, or the head would have wanted authority, and the code would have wanted sanctions.

“And as there was no governing system, so there was no universal rule of morals, for morality was different in different places. In some countries people thought it no more a crime to expose their own children than in others to adopt those of their neighbour. The Persians were not looked upon as the worse moralists for marrying their mothers, nor the Hyrcanians for not marrying at all, nor the Scythians for murdering their parents, nor the Scythians for eating their dead.

“The best writers seldom made use of arguments drawn from future blessedness to enforce their moral instruction. Excellently as they discoursed on the beauty of virtue, their disquisitions generally seemed to want a motive and an end.—Did not such a state of comfortless ignorance, of spiritual degradation, of moral depravity, emphatically call for a religion which should ‘bring life and immortality to light?’ Did it not imperatively require that spirit which should ‘reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment?’ Did it not pant for that blood of Christ which cleanseth from all sin.”—Vol. i. pp. 6—10.

After some pertinent and striking remarks on the imperfections and inefficiency of their mythological religion, the author draws this pointed and beautiful conclusion:—

“A religion so absurd, which had no basis even in probability, and no attraction but what it borrowed from a preposterous fancy, could not satisfy the deep-thinking philosopher;—a philosophy abstruse and metaphysical was not sufficiently accommodated to general use to suit the people. Lactantius, on the authority of Plato, relates, that Socrates

declared there was no such thing as human wisdom. In short, all were dissatisfied. The wise had a vague desire for a religion which comprehended great objects, and had noble ends in view. The people stood in need of a religion which should bring relief to human wants, and consolation to human miseries. They wanted a simple way, proportioned to their comprehension; a short way, proportioned to their leisure; a living way, which should give light to the conscience and support to the mind; a way founded, not on speculation, but evidence, which should carry conversion to the heart as well as conviction to the understanding. Such a religion God was preparing for them in the Gospel of his Son. Christianity was calculated to supply the exigencies both of the Greeks and of the barbarians; but the former, though they more acknowledged their want, more slowly welcomed the relief; while the latter, though they less felt the one, more readily accepted the other."—Vol. i. pp. 17, 18.

Having in the course of this chapter demonstrated the necessity of a more perfect system of belief and morals; of such a system, in short, as the Gospel reveals; the author adverts, in the next, to the historical writers of the New Testament, and points out, with much acuteness, the fidelity, simplicity, and unstudied consonance, so strikingly manifested in their several narratives. Their simplicity is beautifully illustrated.

The following observations, which close this chapter, satisfactorily explain the grounds on which St. Paul is selected as a model and recommended as an example:—

"Indeed it seemed necessary, in order to demonstrate that the principles of Christianity are not unattainable, nor its precepts impracticable, that the New Testament should, in some part, present to us a full exemplification of its doctrines and of its spirit; that they should, to produce their practical effect, be embodied in a form purely human,—for the character of the Founder of its religion is deified humanity. Did the Scriptures present no such exhibition, infidelity might have availed itself of the omission, for the purpose of asserting that Christianity was only a bright chimera, a beautiful fiction of the imagina-

tion; and Plato's fair idea might have been brought into competition with the doctrines of the Gospel. But in St. Paul is exhibited a portrait which not only illustrates its Divine truth, but establishes its moral efficacy; a portrait entirely free from any distortion in the drawing, from any extravagance in the colouring.

"It is the representation of a man struggling with the sins and infirmities natural to man; yet habitually triumphing over them by that Divine grace which had first rescued him from prejudice, bigotry, and unbelief. It represents him resisting, not only such temptations as are common to men, but surmounting trials to which no other man was ever called; furnishing in his whole practice not only an instructor, but a model; shewing every where in his writings, that the same offers, the same supports, the same victories, are tendered to every suffering child of mortality,—that the waters of eternal life are not restricted to prophets and apostles, but are offered freely to every one that thirsteth,—offered without money and without price."—Vol. i. pp. 45—47.

As the character of St. Paul is chiefly to be traced in the Epistles which bear his name, our Author very properly allots the third chapter to remarks "on the epistolary writers of the New Testament, and particular St. Paul;" and there is much ingenuity and pathos in the manner in which this subject is introduced.

"Can the reader of taste and feeling, who has followed the much-enduring hero of the Odyssey with growing delight and increasing sympathy, though in a work of fiction, through all his wanderings, peruse with inferior interest the genuine voyages of the Apostle of the Gentiles over nearly the same seas? The fabulous adventurer, once landed, and safe on the shores of his own Ithaca, the reader's mind is satisfied; for the object of his anxiety is at rest. But not so ends the tale of the Christian hero.—Who ever closed St. Luke's narrative of the diversified events of St. Paul's travels; who ever accompanied him with the interest his history demands, from the commencement of his trials at Damascus to his last deliverance from shipwreck, and left him *preaching in his own hired house at Rome*, without feeling as if

he had abruptly lost sight of some one very dear to him, without sorrowing that they should see his face no more, without indulging a wish that the intercourse could have been carried on to the end, though that end were martyrdom.

"Such readers, and perhaps only such, will rejoice to renew their acquaintance with this *very chiefest of the apostles*; not indeed in the communication of subsequent facts, but of important principles; not in the records of the biographer, but in the doctrines of the saint. In fact, to the history of Paul in the Sacred Oracles succeed his Epistles. And these Epistles, as if through design, open with that "to the beloved of God called to be saints" in that very city, the mention of his residence in which concludes the preceding narrative.

"Had the Sacred Canon closed with the evangelical narrations, had it not been determined in the counsels of Divine Wisdom, that a subsequent portion of inspired Scripture in another form, should have been added to the historical portions, that the Epistles should have conveyed to us the results of the mission and the death of Christ, how immense would have been the disadvantage, and how irreparable the loss! May we presume to add, how much less perfect would have been our view of the scheme of Christianity, had the New Testament been curtailed of this important portion of religious and practical instruction."—Vol. i. pp. 48—50.

In contending for the Epistles against those who represent them as having a tendency to derogate from the authority of the Gospels, our author thus pointedly argues:—

"To degrade any portion of the revealed will of God is no proof of reverence for Him whose will is revealed. But it is preposterous to insinuate, that a regard for the Epistles is calculated to diminish a regard for the Gospels. Where else can we find such believing, such admiring, such adoring views of Him whose life the Gospel records? Where else are we so grounded in that love which passeth knowledge? Where else are we so continually taught to be looking unto Jesus? Where else are we so powerfully reminded that there is no other name under heaven by which we may be saved? We may as well assert, that the existing laws, of which *Magna*

Charta is the original, diminish our reverence for this palladium itself; this basis of our political security, as the Gospel is of our moral and spiritual privileges. In both cases the derived benefit sends us back to the well-head from whence it flows.

"He who professes to read the holy Scriptures for his 'instruction,' should recollect, whenever he is disposed to be captious, that they are written also for his correction. If we really believe that Christ speaks to us in the Gospels, we must believe that he speaks to us in the Epistles also. In the one he addresses us in his militant, in the other in his glorified character. In one, the Divine Instructor speaks to us on earth; in the other, from heaven. The internal wisdom, the divinity of the doctrines, the accordance both of doctrine and precept with those delivered by the Saviour himself, the powerful and abiding effects which, for near two thousand years they have produced, and are actually producing, on the hearts and lives of multitudes; the same spirit which inspired the writer still ready to assist the reader; all together forming, to every serious inquirer who reads them with an humble heart and a docile spirit, irrefragable arguments, unimpeachable evidence, that they possess as full a claim to inspiration, and consequently have as forcible demand on his belief and obedience, as any of the less litigated portions of the book of God."—Vol. i. pp. 68—70.

With the fourth chapter commences, what forms the principal subject of the work; and both that and the sixteen following chapters are exclusively devoted to the consideration of "the character and practical writings of St. Paul." In pursuit of the object which our author has in view, she has shewn equal penetration and judgment, without affecting any artificial method. She has selected her topics with a wise discrimination; and handled them with such dexterity, as at once to exhibit the Apostle in the loftiest points of view, and yet never to take him out of that sphere within which the reader considers himself to be placed. It is the happy talent of this author to bring her subject into contact with those for whose use it is de-

signed; and in no case was the exercise of such a talent more needed, than in that which has called forth the present remarks. There is something so elevated, so grand, so preter-human in the character of this distinguished Apostle, that it would have appeared, antecedently to the execution, difficult, if not impracticable, to adapt it to general imitation. This task, however, our author has most happily accomplished. She has displayed the qualities of her hero in so soft a colouring, and has, if we may so speak, graduated their exercise along such a scale of duties, that we grow familiar with the character as it is portrayed before us, and at once feel ourselves stimulated to imitate qualities exercised in the same circumstances with our own.

Having thus stated what has occurred to us on a general view of this part of the work, we shall now proceed to examine it more in detail.

The first quality of St. Paul, to which our attention is called, is that which gave direction, and purity, and elevation to all the rest, his "faith;" and this is evinced to have been, in his own estimation, as in point of fact it is in that of every genuine Christian, "a *practical* principle;" a principle "received into the heart, acknowledged by the understanding, and operating on the practice." After tracing its operation as regulating, subduing, and transforming the mind, our author enforces the truth of what had been advanced in the following just and dignified appeal:—

"Paul is a wonderful instance of the power of this principle. That he should be so entirely carried out of his natural character; that he who, by his persecuting spirit, courted the favour of the intolerant Sanhedrim, should be brought to act in direct opposition to their prejudices, supported by no human protection, sustained alone by the grace of Him whom he had so stoutly opposed; that his confidence in

God should rise in proportion to his persecutions from man; that the whole bent of his soul should be set directly contrary to his natural propensities, the whole force of his mind and actions be turned in full opposition to his temper, education, society, and habits; that not only his affections should be diverted into a new channel, but that his judgment and understanding should sail in the newly directed current; that his bigotry should be transformed into candour, his fierceness into gentleness, his untameable pride into charity, his intolerance into meekness,—can all this be accounted for on any principle inherent in human nature, on any principle uninspired by the spirit of God?

"After this instance,—and, blessed be God, the instance, though superior, is not solitary; the change, though miraculous in this case, is not less certain in others,—shall the doctrine so exemplified continue to be the butt of ridicule? While the scoffing infidel virtually puts the renovation of the human heart nearly on a footing with the Metamorphoses of Ovid, or the transmigrations of Pythagoras, let not the timid Christian be discouraged; let not his faith be shaken, though he may find that the principle to which he has been taught to trust his eternal happiness, is considered as false by him who has not examined into its truth; that the change, of which the sound believer exhibits so convincing an evidence, is derided as absurd by the philosophical sceptic, treated as chimerical by the superficial reasoner, or silently suspected as incredible by the decent moralist."—Vol. i. pp. 90—92.

The "morality" of the Apostle is next considered. And it is affirmed (with how much truth, we need scarcely say,) that "as there never was a man who expanded and illustrated so fully the doctrines of grace, so there never was one whose character and compositions exhibit a more consistent and high-toned morality."

Having discriminated with much precision between *Christian* and *worldly* morality, our author thus compendiously and beautifully describes the former as it appears in the writings of this masterly preceptor:—

"We have employed the term *morality* in compliance with common usage; but,

adopted in the worldly sense, it gives but an imperfect idea of the Apostle's meaning. His preceptive passages are encircled with a kind of glory; they are illuminated with a beam from Heaven; they proceed from the Spirit of God, and are produced by faith in Him. There is every where that beautiful intermixture of motive and action, that union of the cause and the effect, the faith and its fruits, that uniform balance of the principle and the produce, which render these Epistles an exhaustless treasury of practical wisdom, as well as an imperishable record of Divine Grace."—Vol. i. p. 117.

The following observations in the next chapter, "on the disinterestedness of St. Paul," are equally just and pertinent:—

"Saint Paul and his associates were the first moral instructors who preached not themselves. Perhaps there is scarcely a more striking proof of the grandeur of his spirit, than his indifference to popularity. This is an elevation of character, which not only no Pagan sage has reached, but which not every Christian teacher has been found to attain."—Vol. i. p. 122.

"Another instance of a human being so entirely devoid of selfishness, one who never took his own ease, or advantage, or safety, or credit into the account, cannot be found. If he considered his own sufferings, he considered them for the sake of his friends. 'Whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation.' The only joy he seemed to derive, when he was 'pressed out of measure, above strength,' was, that others might be comforted and encouraged by his sufferings. So also of his consolations; the principal joy which he derived from them was, that others might be animated by them. This anxiety for the proficiency of his converts, in preference to his own safety; his disposition to regard every object in due subjection to the great design of his ministry; his humble vigilant care, while exulting in the hope of an eternal crown, that he might 'not himself be cast away;'—form, in combination with the rest of his conduct, a character which we must allow has not only no superior, but no parallel." Vol. i. pp. 127, 128.

In the two next chapters, which treat of this Apostle's "prudence

towards the Jews," and his "judgment towards the Pagans," there is a rich accumulation of acute remark and eloquent description.

In investigating "the general principle of St. Paul's writings," and in discussing the merits of his "style and genius," (which occupy the ninth and tenth chapters,) our author makes a variety of observations, which, while they illustrate the topic to which they are applied, suggest many useful hints for correcting the errors both in judgment and taste which prevail among the different classes of Christians. Our limits oblige us to pass over much which we should be glad to extract; but the following passage, as explaining the *general* character of St. Paul's writings, and exploding the sentiment, to which we before alluded, of their being chiefly local and temporary, is of so much importance, that we cannot forbear exhibiting it at length.

"In regard to St. Paul's ecclesiastical polity, we are aware that some persons, with a view to lower the general usefulness of his Epistles, object, that in many instances, especially in the second to the Corinthians, the Apostle has limited his instructions to usages which relate only to the peculiar concerns of a particular church or individual person, and that they might have been spared in a work meant for general edification.

"But these are not, as some insist, mere local controversies, obsolete disputes, with which we have no concern. Societies, as well as the individuals of whom they are composed, are much the same in all periods; and though the contentions of the churches which he addressed, might differ something in matter, and much in form and ceremony, from those of modern date; yet the spirit of division, of animosity, of error, of opposition, with which all churches are more or less infected, will have such a common resemblance in all ages, as may make us submit to take a hint or a caution even from topics which may seem foreign to our concerns; and it adds to the value of Saint Paul's expos-

tulations, that they may be made in some degree applicable to other cases. His directions are minute, as well as general, so as scarcely to leave any of the incidents of life, or the exigencies of society, totally unprovided for.

"There are, it is obvious, certain things which refer to particular usages of the general church at its first institution, which no longer exist. There are frequent references to the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and other circumstances, which though they have now ceased, are of great importance as connected with its history, and assisting in its first formation; and the writer who had neglected to have recorded them would have been blameable, and the Epistles which had not alluded to them, would have been imperfect.

"While the Apostle made adequate provisions, such as the existing case required, or rather permitted, he did not absolutely legislate, as to external things, for any church; wisely leaving Christianity at liberty to incorporate herself with the laws of any country into which she might be introduced; and while the doctrines of the new religion were precise, distinct, and definite, its ecclesiastical character was of that generalized nature which would allow it to mix with any form of national government. This was a likely means both to promote its extension, and to prevent it from imbibing a political temper, or a spirit of interference with the secular concerns of any country.

"The wonder is, that the work is so little local, that it savours so little of Antioch or Jerusalem, of Philippi or Corinth; but that almost all is of such general application; relative circumstances did indeed operate, but they always operated subordnately. The Epistle to the Ephesians is not marked with one local peculiarity. There is not a single deduction to be made from the universal applicableness of this elegant and powerful epitome of the Gospel.

"Saint Paul belongs not particularly to the period in which he lived, but is equally the property of each successive race of beings. Time does not diminish their interest in him. He is as fresh to every century as to his own; and the truths he preaches will be as intimately connected with that age which shall precede the dissolution of the world, as that in which he wrote. The sympathies of the real be-

Christ. *Observ. No. 161.*

liever will always be equally awakened by doctrines which will equally apply to their consciences, by principles which will always have a reference to their practice, by promises which will always carry consolation to their hearts. By the Christians of all countries Paul will be considered as a cosmopolite, and by those of all ages as a contemporary. Even when he addresses individuals, his point of view is mankind. He looked to the world as his scene, and to collective man as the actor." *Vol. i. pp. 247—252.*

"Tenderness of heart," and "heavenly-mindedness," are the next qualities to which our author adverts in the great character which she has undertaken to delineate; and it is but justice to her to say, that she describes them with a sensibility of heart, and an elevation of spirit, worthy of the subject. We could present our readers with many passages of exquisite beauty from each of the chapters in which these qualities are respectively treated, but we shall confine ourselves to a single extract from that on "heavenly-mindedness." We are aware indeed, that in speaking of "heavenly mindedness," we lay ourselves open to the charge of enthusiasm from some who "profess and call themselves Christians." Such persons must allow themselves to be reminded, that to elevate the soul above the influence of the body was declared by the wisest of the heathens to be the aim and the perfection of philosophy. It was necessary, however, to be better-instructed than the wisest of the heathen, to know how to accomplish this desirable end. Heavenly-mindedness expresses what philosophy inculcated, but could not teach; and he is in fact the most consummate philosopher who has learnt from Christianity to have his conversation in heaven. But to return: our author having described the quality under consideration to be "the uniting link between doctrinal and practical piety," and to consist "in an en-

ture consecration of the affections, a voluntary surrender of the whole man to God," points out its influence on this great Apostle, in a variety of striking particulars. The following passage is among the number:—

"His spirit seems most intimately to identify itself with the church of Ephesus. What an improbable union! The late idolatrous worshippers of Diana, and the late persecutor of the saints of Jesus, have now but one heart and one soul! These recent enemies to Christ, and to each other, now meet in one common point of attraction. With what holy triumph does he dilate on their common faith! that love of God in Christ Jesus which is their common centre and bond of union!

"Still, as we have such frequent occasion to observe, he does not sacrifice practical duty to the indulgence of his rapture. Still he does not allow even these Ephesians to rest satisfied with the grace they have received. It is not enough that they have been favoured with a vocation; they must 'walk worthy of it.' 'The perfecting of the saints' must be carried on: 'they must reach to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.' No such perfection had been attained as would allow them to rest in their present position. Even in this highly favoured church, *progress* is enjoined, pressed, reiterated. No elevation of devout feeling sets him above attention to moral goodness.

"Nothing can be more beautiful than the abrupt apostrophes of praise and gratitude into which, in the midst of sorrow, of exhortation, of reproof, he unexpectedly breaks out. The love of his Redeemer so fills his soul, that it requires an effort to restrain its outward expression. Even when engaged in the transaction of business, and directing the concerns of others, which, by an ordinary mind, would have been pleaded as a valid reason for suspending spiritual ideas, and dismissing spiritual feelings, they yet mix themselves, as it were involuntarily, with his secular cares; there is not only a satisfaction but a joyfulness in these escapes of affection which seem to spring from his soul, in proportion to the depression of his circumstances, to the danger which surrounded, to the deaths which threatened him." Vol. ii. pp. 53—55.

After having exhibited (in chap. xiii.) "a general view of St. Paul's qualifications," and detailed (in chap. xiv.) his masterly exposure of "the love of money;" our author presents us (in chap. xv.) with a luminous estimate of "the genius of Christianity," as it appeared in her favourite Apostle. The mention of Philippi, as connected with St. Paul, awakens in her classical memory the recollection of another distinguished person with whose name and character, although from a very different cause, that city is also associated. The contrast to which these combinations give occasion, is very happily imagined, and executed.

"How little, in the eyes of the sober Christian, does the renowned Roman, who, scarcely half a century before, sacrificed his life to his disappointment, at this very Philippi, appear, in comparison of the man who addressed this Epistle to the same city. Saint Paul was not less brave than Brutus, but his magnanimity was of a higher strain. Paul was exercised in a long series of sufferings from which the sword of Brutus, directed by any hand but that of Paul himself, would have been a merciful deliverance. Paul, too, was a patriot, and set a proper value on his dignity as a Roman citizen. He too was a champion for freedom; but he fought for that higher species of liberty,

'Unsung by poets, and by senators unprais'd.'

"Was it courage of the best sort, in the Roman enthusiast for freedom, to abandon his country to her evil destiny, at the very moment when she most needed his support? Was it true generosity or patriotism, after having killed his friend, to whom he owed his fortune and his life,*—usurper though he was,—voluntarily to leave this adored country a prey to *inferior* usurpers? Though Cæsar had robbed Rome of her liberty, should Brutus rob her of his own guardian virtues? Why not say to the Romans, as Paul did to the Philippians—*Though I desire to depart, nevertheless to*

"* At the battle of Pharsalia."

abide in the flesh is more needful for you? This would have been indeed patriotism, because it would have been disinterested. Was not Paul's the truer heroism? He also was in a strait between two events, life and death. He knew, what Brutus, alas! did not know; 'that to die was gain;' but, instead of deserting his cause, by a pusillanimous self-murder, he submitted to live for its interest. The gloomy despair of the Stoic, and the cheerful submission of the Saint, present a lively contrast of the effects of the two religions on two great souls.

"It is a coincidence too remarkable to be passed over in silence, that Paul was directed by '*a vision from heaven*' to go to Philippi;—that Brutus was summoned to the same city by his *evil genius*. The hero obeyed the phantom; the Apostle was 'not disobedient to the heavenly vision;'—to what different ends let the concluding histories of the devoted suicide and the devoted martyr declare!—Will it be too fanciful to add, that the spectre which lured the Roman to his own destruction, and the vision which in the same place invited the Apostle to preach salvation to others, present no unapt emblem of the opposite genius of Paganism and Christianity." Vol. ii. pp 149—152.

St. Paul's "respect for constituted authorities," furnishes our author with an opportunity of demonstrating the correctness of the Apostle's notions on the origin and uses of civil government, and the close alliance between political obedience (properly understood) and genuine Christianity. Adverting to the experience of the late revolutionary times, Mrs. More very justly observes it to have been not the least considerable among the triumphs of Religion recently witnessed, "that whereas Christianity was originally charged with a design to overturn states and empires, we have seen the crime completely turned over to the accusers; we have seen the avowed adversaries of Christ become the strenuous subverters of order, law, and government."

Hitherto we have been engaged in contemplating St. Paul in high and commanding positions: in chapter

xvii. we are invited to consider him as contracting his greatness to the dimensions of ordinary life, and condescending with grace to the care of "inferior concerns." Nothing can be more true than the following assertion; yet of whom, may we ask, St. Paul himself excepted, could such an assertion with truth have been made?—

"Amidst all the higher parts of spiritual instruction; amidst all the solidity of deep practical admonition, there is not, perhaps, a single instance in which this author has omitted to inculcate any one of the little morals, any one even of what may be called those minor circumstances, which constitute the decorums and decencies of life. Nor does his zeal for promoting the greatest actions, ever make him unmindful of the grace, the propriety, the manner with which they are to be performed." Vol. ii. pp. 183, 184.

There are many exquisite touches in this part of the portrait, to which, if our limits would have permitted, we could with great pleasure have adverted. But we must satisfy ourselves with recommending to our readers, that portion of the chapter which exhibits St. Paul in his Epistle to Philemon, as under "the heavy load of cares, and sorrows, and persecutions; with the addition of ecclesiastical affairs, the most extensive, and the most complicated,"—"attending minutely to an object so inconsiderable, as the concerns of a poor run-away slave, 'the son of his bonds.'" The commentary on this transaction is exceedingly ingenious, and is followed by some strictures upon the injudicious reports of converted criminals, in which "the baskets of the hawkers are said *this year* to have abounded," on the justice of which we are not able, from our own observation, to pass sentence.

The two succeeding chapters unfold the sentiments of this Apostle "on the resurrection;" and "on prayer, thanksgiving, and religious joy;" and the twentieth chapter,

with which the immediate subject of the work concludes, holds him up as "an example to familiar life."

The two remaining chapters are devoted to the consideration of "the superior advantages of the present period for the attainment of knowledge, religion, and happiness," and "some of the causes which impede general improvement." How highly our author appreciates the advantages of the present period, will appear from the following statement:—

"Had any patriarch, or saint, who was permitted only some rare and transient glimpses of the promised blessing, been allowed, in prophetic vision, to penetrate through the long vista of ages, which lay in remote futurity before him—had he been asked, whether, if his power concurred with his choice, in what age and in what nation he would have wished his lot assigned him—is it not more than probable that he would have replied—IN GREAT BRITAIN, IN THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY!" Vol. ii. p. 300.

This exalted estimate does not, however, prevent our author from discerning the melancholy disproportion between our attainments and our privileges. After animadverting with just severity on different errors both speculative and practical, which operate as impediments to general improvement, Mrs. More returns to St. Paul and his writings; and concludes her Essay with the following energetic and animated passage:—

"Let us close our frequent reference to Saint Paul as a pattern for general imitation, by repeating one question illustrative of those opposite qualities which ought to meet in every question. If the most zealous advocate for *spiritual influences* were to select, from all the writers of sacred antiquity, the most distinguished champion of his great cause, on whom would he fix his choice? And if the most strenuous assertor of the duty of *personal activity in moral virtue* were to choose from all mankind the man who most completely exemplified this character in himself, where

must he search? Would not the two antagonists, when they met in the field of controversy, each in defence of his favourite tenet, find that they had fixed on the same man, —Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles? If then we propose him as our model, let us not rest till something of the same combination be formed in ourselves.

"To this end let us diligently study his Epistles, in which the great doctrines of salvation are amply unfolded, and the mode of its attainment completely detailed. In contemplating the works of this great master of the human mind, we more than perceive, we *feel*, their applicableness to all times, places, circumstances, and persons; and this, not only because the Word of Eternal Life is always the same; but because the human heart, which that Word reveals to itself, is still the same also. We behold, as in a mirror, the fidelity, we had almost said the identity, of his representation.—face answering to face. We feel that we are personally interested in every feature he delineates. He lets us into the secrets of our own bosoms. He discloses to us the motives of our own conduct. He touches the true springs of right and wrong, lays bare the moral quality of actions, brings every object to the true point of comparison with each other, and all to the genuine standard of the unerring Gospel. By him we are clearly taught that the same deed done from the desire of pleasing God, or the desire of popular favour, becomes as different in the eye of religion, as any two actions in the eye of men.

"There we shall see also, that Saint Paul evinced the sincerity of his eternal hopes by constantly preparing himself for their fruition. These hopes shaped his conduct, and moulded his spirit to a resemblance of the state he hoped for: and he best proved his belief that there really was such a state, by labouring to acquire the dispositions which might qualify him for its enjoyment. Without this aim, without this effort, without this perseverance, his faith would have been fruitless, his hope delusive, his profession hypocrisy, and his 'preaching vain.'

"Let us image to ourselves the Saviour of the world, holding up professing Christians as a living exemplification of his religion; of that religion which he taught by his doctrines and ratified by his blood. Let us represent him to our

imaginings as referring to the lives of his followers for the truth of his word. Do we not tremble at such a responsibility? Do we not shrink from such a comparison? Are we not alarmed at the bare idea of bringing reproach on his Gospel, or dishonour on his name?

"Christians! why would you wait till you arrive at heaven, before you contribute to the great end of every dispensation,—namely, *that God may be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe?* Even now, something of that assimilation should be taking place, which will be perfected when 'we shall see Him as He is,' and which will never take place if the resemblance begin not here. Beatification is only the finishing of the likeness. Intuition will only complete the transformation." Vol. ii. pp. 344—348.

We have now brought our Review of these volumes to a close; and as we have allowed ourselves considerable latitude both in the way of analysis and quotation, we shall despatch what remains to be said in a very few words. Of the merits of the work we have spoken strongly; and of its faults, whatever they may be, we freely confess ourselves to have no disposition to speak at all. It is reported to the honour of the law of the land, that it does not concern itself about trifles; and we cannot but think, that it would be to the advantage of the commonwealth of letters, if the law of criticism were to follow, on some occasions at least, so generous and dignified an example. We have considered the present to be one of those cases, in which our duty to the public is better discharged by pointing out the excellences of the work, which we had undertaken to review, than by minutely striking a balance between its merits and its defects. If it should be thought, that respect for the author has had some influence in inclining us to the course we have pursued, we shall not be over anxious to vindicate ourselves from the charge. The name of Hannah More is certainly associated in our minds with a degree of respect which would not allow us to trifle with her feelings, or tamper with her reputation. We

cannot forget how much we are indebted to her for the seasonableness, the variety, and the extent of her numerous literary exertions. Least of all can we overlook our obligations to her, both as Britons and as Christians, for those admirable effusions of patriotism, and piety, and talent, which, under the name of "The Cheap Repository Tracts," circulated so much useful truth among the lower orders of the community, and contributed so essentially, through the blessing of God, to fix the wavering principles of loyalty and religion in the hearts of the people. Our readers will bear with us, if, actuated by these considerations, we never fail, when speaking of Mrs. More, to employ the language of reverence and affection. We wish her to know, that the gratitude of the public bears some proportion to the zeal with which she has laboured in their service; and that she is now regarded among the brightest ornaments of her country, as she will be hereafter remembered among its greatest benefactors.

Practical and Familiar Sermons, designed for Parochial and Domestic Instruction. By the Rev. EDWARD COOPER, Rector of Hamstall-Ridware and of Yoxall in the County of Stafford; and late Fellow of All-Souls College, Oxford. Vol. III. London: Cadell and Davies. 1815. 12mo. pp. 329.

WE doubt not that most of our readers have participated in the satisfaction which we felt when the volume now before us was announced to the public. Crowded as our shelves already were with publications of this description, we were in no ordinary degree desirous of adding this to their number; not only from having had such complete proof of the excellence and usefulness of Mr. Cooper's sermons, but also because we concur in the opinion which is, we

believe, pretty commonly entertained, that sermons of the class to which these belong, are calculated, even more than others, to promote general good. The value of a compilation of plain, practical discourses, adapted to the understandings and circumstances of the lower orders of society, will be fully appreciated, perhaps, by those only who, feeling a tender solicitude about the eternal interests of their servants and other dependants, are anxious to supply to them, in the best manner possible, those means of spiritual instruction which may not be afforded them in public. That such a deficiency as that here adverted to exists, owing to causes which it is not necessary to specify, and that a proportionable want of familiar sermons has been felt by conscientious individuals, is a well known fact. It is not, however, that we forget or undervalue the treasures of this kind which we possess. We are indebted to many excellent divines, some of whom are still labouring in the sacred vineyard, others reaping the fruits of their labours, for discourses which cannot be read or heard, if read and heard attentively, without improvement, though possessing different degrees of comparative as well as of positive excellence. We need scarcely mention the names of Walker of Truro, and Milner; and (though, perhaps, they are more especially calculated for the higher orders) of Gisborne and Venn. Still less will our readers need to be reminded that the volume now under review has been preceded by two others from the same author, particularly directed, like the present, to the purposes of domestic and parochial instruction. But this supply, great as it is, by no means meets the demand. And this deficiency we conceive to arise, in part, from the difficulty of providing this supply. The composition of sermons adapted to the lower classes of the

community is a work, for the successful performance of which several qualifications of no ordinary kind are requisite. One of primary importance is, that the writer have *clear ideas* on the subject of which he treats. This, indeed, should be common to all who wish to convey instruction to others, whether by speaking or writing. But it is more indispensable in those who undertake to instruct the poor and uninformed; on this account, that hearers of this class are less able to supply, by the exercise of their own understandings, the want of clear conception in the instructor. It is not, by any means, that we entertain degrading notions of the capacities of the lower orders; on the contrary, we think it undeniable that they are endued with understandings which are naturally no less capable of improvement than those of their superiors. It is equally certain, however, that from the circumstances of their situation in life, and particularly from their early habits, their minds become less quick of apprehension, and less capable of distinguishing, comparing, combining, and disposing the ideas which are presented to them than those that are more habituated to those exercises. And it is this which renders a clear and distinct conception, with its natural concomitants, luminous and orderly arrangement, and perspicuity of style, so peculiarly important in one who composes sermons more immediately for the lower classes of society.—To this it is extremely desirable that he should add *warmth of feeling*. Earnest appeals, affectionate admonitions and exhortations, and tender expostulations, have a peculiar efficacy on the minds of the poor and unlearned, and are frequently instrumental in lodging a salutary and abiding impression, when an argumentative and less animated address would fail of exciting attention. We may, perhaps, be

thought to indulge somewhat of a love of fiction, when we state a *vivid imagination* to be, in our opinion, another important qualification in a writer of sermons of the class now under consideration. We do not, of course, mean that he should embellish his discourses with poetical imagery and splendid descriptions; but we apprehend that nothing is of greater use to uneducated minds than apt and forcible illustrations borrowed from familiar subjects: and it will not be denied that a preacher of a ready fancy, and one naturally inclined to seize on every object which presents itself to his mind, will have the advantage, in this respect, over one who is of a less excursive habit.—There is still another particular, which we regard as, if possible, still more requisite in the instructor of the lower classes; and that is, a *familiar acquaintance with their habits of thinking and feeling*; with their common notions, prepossessions, and prejudices; with their modes of judging and reasoning. However incompetent they may be to pursue a long train of thought, or to employ or estimate the aids of artificial reason, they are in general by no means deficient in the use of what is termed *natural logic*. Numbers of them are persons of excellent plain common sense, and the simplicity and honesty of their minds give them no small advantage over many of their more refined and sophisticated superiors. Much good may be expected, through the Divine blessing, from plain, simple appeals to their consciences; from laying open before them the secrets of their minds, and exposing the particular errors in opinion and practice which actually prevail amongst them. The preacher will be much assisted in his attempts to awaken conviction in their hearts, if he can, as it were, make them their own judges, by reminding them of the principles and maxims by which they are governed in the

ordinary affairs of life, and thus, by forcible contrasts and familiar comparisons, leading them to pass sentence on themselves in matters of religion. In order to secure these and other similar advantages to his ministry, it is manifest that he must himself be intimately conversant with their peculiar habits of thinking and acting.

In the particulars to which we have here adverted, as constituting, in our opinion, qualifications especially important in the instructor of those who occupy the humbler stations of life, Mr. Cooper appears to us, perhaps with a single exception, we mean the liveliness of imagination, greatly to excel. The plainness and perspicuity of his style, together with the easy flow and natural arrangement of his ideas, shew him to be very clear and distinct in his conceptions of the great subjects of which he treats. His sermons seem to be composed with the freedom and unstudied eloquence with which a man converses on a subject of which he is perfect master. They are, for the most part, animated also with an affectionate earnestness, which discovers much tenderness of disposition. He seems to make the case and situation of his hearers his own; to intercede, as it were, with them in their own behalf; to marshal before them the terrors of God's justice, and display the riches of his grace, with an importunity and wakeful solicitude, like that of a parent yearning over a beloved child in a season of danger. In the delineation of character—in the development of feelings—in analyzing and laying open the secret workings of the mind, and the hidden springs of action—he displays an energy and spirit which at the same time evince the activity of his own mind, and give such a reality and life to the images which he presents to the minds of others, that they can scarcely fail of discovering intuitively their own resemblance in them. Nor let

it be thought that these observations are but little applicable to compositions which are, or ought to be, unelaborate and unartificial. Mr. Cooper's sermons, which are what they profess to be, familiar and simple, are nevertheless the productions of a mind capable of considerable efforts; and furnish, in our estimation, a striking testimony to the truth of a sometimes disputed position, that superiority is often most conspicuous in the masterly execution of comparatively easy performances. Of the last qualification which we mentioned as peculiarly desirable in sermons of this class; viz a familiar acquaintance with the modes of thinking, the feelings, habits, and prejudices of the lower orders, Mr. Cooper's sermons afford the most abundant indications; and this circumstance alone would, in our judgment, confer a high value on them. And when in addition to these characters of excellence, which we have stated as in some measure appropriate to familiar discourses, we remark that they possess, in no less a degree, those other qualities so essential to sermons of every description, a sound and explicit statement of the leading doctrines of the Gospel, connected with an ample exposition of evangelical principles and duties—an impartial exhibition of every part of revealed truth, without any accommodation of Scripture to peculiar religious views—a sober and judicious interpretation of the sacred text according to the analogy of faith—and the faithful and forcible application of subjects to the consciences of the hearers; we assign what we think will be deemed a sufficient reason for the value we attach to the volume before us.—It is time, however, that we lay before our readers a slight sketch of its contents, together with a few extracts which may enable them to form, for themselves, a judgment of its merits.

Of the twenty sermons which compose the volume, the first is entitled "The Gospel Message;" in which the words addressed by the Israelitish deliverer, Ehud, to the king of Moab (Judges iii. 20), are considered as applicable by every minister of the Gospel to each individual in his congregation. In order to explain and justify this application of the passage, Mr. Cooper observes, that the ministers of the Gospel are God's *messengers* in a certain sense, though not in the same sense in which Ehud, the Prophets and Apostles, or the first Christian preachers, were; that they are under the most solemn obligations to be faithful in delivering this message; and, as a natural inference from the two foregoing observations, that if men refuse to attend to the message thus delivered, it is at their own peril. On the ground thus laid down he proceeds to a direct and particular application of his text, having first given a compendious statement of the substance of the Gospel-message, and well remarked that this message, though general in substance, branches into a variety of particulars, and must be distinctly addressed to various classes of men, in order to be profitable to any. It is this personal application of the general truths of Scripture which constitutes one distinguishing excellence of Mr. Cooper's sermons. On the present occasion, he urges the important message with which he is entrusted—1st, on careless and thoughtless persons; 2d, on the ungodly and profane; 3d, on the humble and serious inquirer after Divine truth; 4th, on declining professors of godliness; 5th, on the convinced and self-condemning sinner; and, 6th, on the established Christian: and the suitableness of his addresses to these different characters furnishes, in common with many others of his sermons, an admirable illustration of St. Paul's declaration to Timothy, that "all Scrip-

ture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

The Second Sermon is from Acts viii. 35. and is entitled "Jesus the great Subject of Christian Preaching." In the opening of this sermon the writer draws an instructive outline of the discourse in which Philip may be supposed to have initiated the Ethiopian eunuch in the fundamental truths of the Christian Religion.

Sermon III. on "The broad and the narrow Way," from Matt. vii. 13, 14, is a peculiarly useful discourse.

Sermon IV. professes to state and illustrate "The real Cause of Men's Rejection of the Gospel," as expressed in the words of Christ, John v. 40. "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life;" or as more fully set forth in the following passage, with which the sermon opens:—

"There is no truth more plainly taught in Scripture than this, that while man's salvation is entirely of God's grace and mercy, his ruin is altogether of himself. If he perish, it will be his own fault, and he will have no one but himself to blame. Wherever the Gospel of Christ comes, it freely invites all to accept the blessings which it brings. Whether men will be the better for the invitation, depends on the reception which they give to it. If they are willing to receive it, and consent to the terms proposed, the blessing will be theirs; but if they refuse and are disobedient, it will be justly withheld from them." p. 47.

We wish that all who speak and write on this important subject, thought and expressed their thoughts with the same faithful adherence to the plain declarations of Holy Writ which Mr. Cooper manifests through the whole of this discourse. Though he has shewn in his two volumes of doctrinal sermons that his sentiments are what Arminians would term Calvinistic, yet he no where

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departs from the genuine, simple sense of Scripture, in order to support any favourite system of theology. Without perplexing himself or his hearers with any impertinent disquisitions respecting the decrees of God, the freedom or impotency of the will, he is content to state the matter simply as he finds it in the sacred text. He affirms the want of willingness to be the obstacle, the only obstacle, which prevents men from coming to Christ; that is (as he explains this term,) from sharing the blessed consequences which are derived by faith from Christ, in this life and that which is to come. He illustrates this position by a reference to several cases, recorded in Scripture, of persons destitute of true religion; and concludes with a brief consideration of the *misery* and *sin* of not coming to Christ.

The Fifth Sermon, on the "Divine Forbearance towards Sinners," furnishes one among many instances of Mr. Cooper's happy accommodation of particular texts to the purposes of general instruction. His text is Hosea xi. 8, 9; in which Jehovah, in gracious condescension to our capacities, represents himself as sustaining a mental conflict between the contending claims of justice and mercy, in respect of his chosen people Israel. In unfolding the primary signification of the passage, Mr. Cooper depicts in a very striking manner, with boldness, yet with reverence, the debate conceived to take place in the Divine mind—the determination of that debate in favour of mercy—and the ground of this determination expressed in the words, "For I am God and not man."

Sermon VI. considers, from Matt. xii. 50, the *description* of Christ's disciples, and the *dignity* conferred on them. On the first of these heads Mr. Cooper very usefully remarks, that there is a plain reason why

"doing the will of God" should be insisted on in Scripture as the distinguishing mark of Christ's true disciples, since it is "the great end of Christianity to bring our wills into a cordial agreement with the will of God;" and because, until this union is effected, we labour under a moral incapacity of enjoying heaven, even supposing we could be admitted into it,—the happiness of that state consisting summarily in a conformity to the mind and will of God. And he further observes that the propriety of thus characterising Christ's disciples is illustrated by considering what is meant by doing God's will; under which term far more is comprehended than any man is able to perform, until he has been made a child of God and a partaker of the Divine nature, through the exercise of that faith in Christ which alone constitutes him one of his true disciples. And in this part of his discourse we cannot but remark how usefully Mr. Cooper exhibits, in their just and natural connection, the fundamental principles and practical effects of the religion of Christ. He reminds his hearers that a primary part of the will of God (the same which is emphatically styled "the *work*" and "the *commandment* of God,") is, that we believe on his Son Jesus Christ; that this belief *implies* a cordial reception of him in the character and for the purposes for which he was sent into the world, and *pre-supposes* a deep conviction of our sinfulness, and an entire renunciation of our own righteousness; and that, as a necessary accompaniment of this faith, we are required also to repent and walk in newness of life. If the excellent example which Mr. Cooper furnishes in this, as indeed he does in almost every other, sermon, were generally imitated, we should not have so much reason to complain of barren systems of unchristianized morality, on the one hand; or of the unmoralized—we

had almost said *immoralizing*—exposition of Christian doctrine, on the other.

In Sermon VII. (2 Thess. iii. 13.) on "The Tendency to Weariness in Well-doing," the author considers the principal causes of the tendency in question to be, fickleness; the want of success in our efforts to do good; and the unkind and injurious treatment to which our benevolent endeavours may not unfrequently expose us. With a view to oppose the tendency to weariness resulting from these causes, he advises that we should consider, 1st, The recorded example of Jesus Christ; 2d, His conduct towards *ourselves*; and, 3dly, The express promise given to perseverance in well-doing, which *may* be attended with success even in this life, and *will certainly* be rewarded with a gracious recompense in the life to come.

In Sermon VIII. Mr. Cooper takes occasion, from Isa. li. 7, 8, to "encourage Christians against the Fear of Man"—judging himself authorized, as well by the general tenor and spirit of the New Testament, as by many particular passages of it, to consider the words of his text as addressed by Christ to his people. We are not disposed to question the propriety of this exposition; being entirely of the author's opinion, that "there is no interpreter of the Bible so good as the Bible itself," and particularly that the promises and consolations with which the prophetic Scriptures of the Old Testament abound, can be understood and applied only by a reference to the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles. On this principle, Mr. Cooper views the words, "ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law," as a strictly evangelical description of true Christians; the former clause being expressive of their inward and experimental acquaintance with the great doctrine

of justification by faith, as revealed and taught in the Gospel—the latter, of their having the image of God stamped upon their souls, and being under the pervading influence of a disposition to delight in his commandments and conform themselves to His will. We cannot help asking ourselves a question, which we wish many writers, or more properly speaking many *preachers*, of sermons would ask themselves, Are the two constituent parts of the true Christian's character, so fully insisted on in their necessary connection and mutual dependance by the author, always held up to view with impartial diligence and fidelity? We must confess ourselves under an apprehension, not wholly unfounded, that there are too many, who, if they do not altogether overlook, either very slightly touch upon, or (what is perhaps most common) wrest from its natural and obvious meaning, the clause "in whose heart is my law," in their delineation of the believer. To all such persons we recommend the attentive perusal of Mr. Cooper's remarks on this part of his subject.

The Ninth Sermon, which is on Jer. viii. 20, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved," affords another specimen of Mr. Cooper's judicious method of drawing general instruction from texts which have a particular and special import.

Sermon X. deduces from Rom. v. 19. a very clear and instructive statement of "the Fall and Recovery of Man." The correspondence between Adam and Christ, considered as the representative respectively of the whole human race and of true believers; the similarity, as to the law of communication, between the effects derived from each to their respective members,—guilt and corruption from the former, pardon and purity from the latter,—together with the pre-eminent advantages resulting from Christ's perfect obedience in regard to the number of

actual offences remitted to his spiritual seed, and their advancement to a state, not only of innocence, but of favour;—these fundamental articles of Christian faith, and the practical consequences attendant on a due reception of them, are unfolded with great plainness and scriptural simplicity. We consider the sermon an excellent compendium of the Gospel, and well calculated to build up its readers in the faith and practice of genuine Christianity.

The Eleventh Sermon is entitled, "The World and the Christian;" and is intended to point out generally what in the text (1 Pet. iv. 4, 5.) is expressed in particular of the first converts to Christianity, viz. the entire change with respect to the inward principles and the outward conduct, produced in all who become true Christians—the misconception and misrepresentation to which the change exposes them from the people of the world—and the judgment which convicts those who revile and oppose them on account of it. The genuine and natural effect of a cordial adoption of evangelical truths, and the contrariety and incompatibility of the spirit of the world and that of the Gospel, are here unfolded in a manner well adapted to promote self-inquiry in the professed disciples of Christ, and to warn those who calumniate his faithful servants of the guilt they incur by so doing.

The Twelfth Sermon contains an admirable view of "The Nature of Sin, Repentance, and Pardoning Mercy, as illustrated in the Parable of the Prodigal Son." We do not remember to have read a more copious or affecting exposition of this most instructive portion of our Saviour's discourses. In the prodigal's estrangement from his indulgent father, his impatience of salutary restraint, his headlong precipitation of himself into vicious indulgence, and his perseverance, for a time, in his wretched course, notwithstanding the distress, disgrace, and ruin

which he had brought upon himself, are exhibited the sinner's wilful rebellion against the goodness and authority of God—his love of iniquity—the awful consequences of sin—its hardening and enslaving nature. In the awakened consciousness, the self-accusing reflections, the humble yet fixed resolution of the prodigal, we see displayed the mixed emotions, heart-rending conflicts, and voluntary surrender of the true penitent;—whilst the readiness of God to notice the first relentings of the contrite offender, to “receive him graciously and love him freely,” is portrayed in the father's compassionate reception of his undeserving child.

In the Thirteenth Sermon, Mr. Cooper takes occasion, from a special caution given by St. Paul to Timothy (1 Tim. v. 22,) in the exercise of his ministry to point out and apply generally “the Danger of partaking of other Men's Sins.” He justly remarks, that this caution is much more commonly necessary than we are apt to suspect, both on account of the great aggravation which our own sins receive from a participation of those of others, and because of our liability so to partake of them, directly or indirectly, 1st, by actively encouraging others to the commission of sin; 2dly, by purposely opposing their progress in religion, by means of ridicule, misrepresentation or threats; 3dly, by furnishing them with means and opportunities of sinning; 4thly, by exciting them to sin by our own example; and 5thly, by neglecting to use the authority we may possess, in order to prevent them from sinning.

In Sermon XIV. Mr. Cooper deduces from St. Paul's prayer for Onesimus (2 Tim. i. 18.) the two following important propositions: 1st, that there is a day coming in which to find mercy of the Lord will be our only consolation and security; and 2dly, that there will be some who in that day will not find

mercy of the Lord. Under the former of these heads, having remarked that by the emphatical expression “that day” so often occurring in the New Testament, the day of judgment is appropriately designated, he exposes in a most useful and convincing manner the erroneous notions so commonly entertained respecting Divine mercy; shewing that numbers, while they profess themselves *suppliants for mercy*, are, more properly speaking, *claimants of justice*. Who those are that will not find mercy of the Lord in that day, he determines by shewing, conversely, what is the character of those who will. This cannot better be expressed than in the short summary with which the discourse closes.

“Such then are the persons who shall find mercy of the Lord in that day. If we hope to find it, let us see that we are persons of this character. Let us see that we trust in Jesus Christ alone for mercy: since ‘whosoever trusteth in Him shall not be confounded.’ Let us see that while through Him we hope for mercy, we flee from sin: since ‘the goodness of God should lead us to repentance.’ Let us see that we shew mercy to others: since ‘blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.’” p. 229.

In the Fifteenth Sermon, the work of the Holy Spirit, as a Comforter, is considered, from John xiv. 16. Mr. Cooper first remarks, that the comfort which the Holy Spirit administers partakes of his own nature: as He is Divine, a Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Holiness—so the consolation He gives is supernatural—spiritual, having its seat in the heart—agreeable to the word of God which is truth itself—and holy in its nature and tendency. He then shews that, in discharging his office, this Divine Agent first removes the false grounds of comfort on which men naturally rest, and then introduces them to solid peace and satisfaction by enabling them to believe in Christ, and thus appropriate to themselves

the blessed hope set before them in the Gospel. The subject is naturally applied to the comforting of such as are under salutary convictions through the awakening influence of the Spirit of God on their hearts.

In the Sixteenth Sermon, the Declaration of Moses to the Israelites, Numb. xxxii. 2. is applied to the purpose of shewing generally the certainty of our sin finding us out—that impenitent offenders will inevitably, though not always speedily, reap the consequences of “their sin.”

The Seventeenth Sermon, entitled “The Wedding Garment,” contains a scriptural and instructive explanation of Matt. xxii. 11—13. It abounds with judicious observations of the most plain and practical tendency. We entirely agree with Mr. Cooper in thinking the Wedding Garment emblematical of something which distinguishes the true Christian from the nominal professor, something which is not *merely* external, and is discernible by God only, viz. *the state and disposition of the heart*, as renewed by the Holy Spirit. And we think this interpretation less liable to exception and misconstruction than those which understand, by the emblem in question, either faith simply or the imputed righteousness of Christ.

The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Sermons are chiefly addressed to young persons; and evince the author's affectionate solicitude for the spiritual welfare of the lambs of his flock.

In the Twentieth Sermon, the Nature and Effects of a due Reception of God's Word, are illustrated and enforced, from 2 Thess. iii. 1. The necessity of receiving it with readiness and humility of mind, *as His word*—the change it produces when so received, viz. the conversion of the soul to God—and the consequent fruit of habitual and progres-

sive holiness—are amply and usefully insisted on.

In giving the foregoing sketch of the sermons which compose this volume, we have almost wholly abstained from making extracts; partly, from fear of extending this Review beyond its just limits—partly, because we really should have felt it difficult to select from any single sermon one part better suited than another to afford a specimen of its merits. We cannot, however, deny ourselves and our readers the pleasure of subjoining a few quotations, which may serve to point out some of what we consider the distinguishing qualities of Mr. Cooper's discourses.

1. Their tendency to promote *personal religion*.

“Is the way in which I am walking, the way of the world, the way of the multitude? Am I doing as others do? Am I following their customs, and maxims, and fashions, acting on their principles, and led by their example? Or have I left this way? Am I no longer following the multitude in doing evil? Have I separated myself from them? Once, I was walking as others walk, in the broad way; have I now entered in at the strait gate? Once, I was swimming down the stream with the rest of the world; am I now turned about, and am I trying to swim against it? Am I sensible of the difficulty which I found, in first making this attempt? Am I conscious how much I had to struggle with from within and from without? Did my worldly friends and worldly interests oppose my entrance? Did my own corrupt heart resist my endeavours, and try to keep me back? Do I now find continual difficulty in following this narrow way? Do I perceive it to be a narrow way? and notwithstanding these things, do I really walk in it? Do I take God's word for my rule? Do I humbly strive to obey his commands in all things? Do I live in constant dependence on his promises of help and strength? Relying on these promises, do I resist the motions of sin in my heart, as well as renounce the practice of it in my life? Do I habitually deny myself, my own corrupt desires, and evil inclinations? Do I daily take up my cross and follow Christ? Do I allow myself in nothing, which the

Bible and my conscience tell me is wrong? Would I rather suffer injury, or loss, than commit sin? Is my hope in heaven? Am I looking for happiness *there*, and not *here*? Do I trust in Jesus Christ, to give me this happiness and to prepare me for it? What says conscience to these questions? Does it say to us, 'Thou knowest nothing, feelest nothing, doest nothing of these things, which belong to the strait gate, and the narrow way? Thou art still in the broad road!' O, listen to the faithful monitor! Remember the broad way is the way of destruction. Stay then no longer in it. Come out, and be separate. Strive to enter in at the strait gate. Strive, and you shall enter. The time past may suffice to have walked in the road of sin and death. Henceforth walk in the way of life, the way of pleasantness and peace. Do you hope that you are already in this way? Pray to the Lord to keep you in it. Strive earnestly to follow it. 'He that endureth unto the end shall be saved: but if any man draw back, my soul (saith the Lord) shall have no pleasure in him.' " pp. 44—46.

"Here then is a still further subject for personal inquiry. Do we *thus* adorn and glorify the gospel? Do we *thus* shew forth its power and excellence in *our* lives? Do we abound in faith, hope, and love, those pure and genuine fruits of true Christianity? If the Apostle were writing *to us* and enforcing the exercise of these Christian graces, could he justly say, as he said to the Thessalonians, '*even as Ye also do?*' Let us endeavour to feel the importance of this inquiry. As Christians, we have not only our own salvation at stake, but the honour of our divine religion. We are required to uphold that honour; and to this end to let it be seen in our own conduct, that the doctrine which we hold is a doctrine according to godliness. We are required to be 'careful in maintaining good works,' to 'let our light shine before men,' to 'hold forth the word of life.' Without such an agreement between our profession and our practice, far from glorifying the Gospel, we shall dishonour and disgrace it, and shall furnish occasion to those who are inclined to speak evil of it.— Besides, if we are Christians indeed, we shall anxiously desire that other persons should become so too. If we have ourselves tasted that the Lord is gracious, it will be one of the first wishes of our hearts to be instrumental in making others partakers of the like precious faith with

ourselves. We cannot but desire that the word of the Lord should have free course; that it should run and be glorified; that it should spread from heart to heart, from house to house, from place to place. There are probably some, possibly many individuals among our friends, our acquaintance, and our neighbours, in whose spiritual concerns we feel a lively interest; and for whose conversion and salvation we anxiously long. The Apostle's exhortation in the text shews us, in this case, to what means we must primarily have recourse. We must *pray* for this blessed work. It is God only, who giveth the increase. It is the Spirit only, who can open the heart to receive, to understand, and to love the truth as it is in Jesus. There is no teacher like him; nor will any one learn to any real purpose, till he is thus taught of God. But in respect to this, as well as to every other gift from above, prayer is the appointed instrument for obtaining it. We must not omit, we must not cease to pray for those whose spiritual good we have at heart. In due time we may hope to reap, if we faint not. But to the efficacy of our prayers for them in secret, let us add also the benefit of our good example in their sight. Let it be our aim by a suitable, a consistent, and an irreproachable conduct to soften their prejudices, and to win them to Jesus Christ. Let them see in us a clear and a bright example of what religion really is; that so their mistakes respecting it may be corrected. Let them see, that it leads those who embrace it to be kind, cheerful, and contented; to be meek, patient, and industrious. Let them see that it enlivens the spirits, amends the tempers, and improves the dispositions; that it makes persons orderly, and submissive, and faithful in discharging the duties of their station, and ready and disposed, so far as their means may extend, to every good work. In short, let them see in our example, that true religion is a reasonable and a happy thing; that while it elevates the affections and purifies the heart, it makes its followers happier and better than all the rest of mankind. Thus shall we glorify the Word of the Lord, and shall be instrumental in spreading the savour of real Christianity." pp. 326—328.

2. The graphical delineation of character and feelings.

"Extreme want, and the prospect of

being starved to death, at length brought the prodigal to his senses, humbled his pride, and led him to see and to own his guilt and misery. 'He came to himself.' Hitherto he had been acting the part of a fool and a madman. Under the idea of pursuing his pleasures, he had been injuring and destroying himself. This truth he now discovered; and comparing his present, wretched state, with the happiness which he once enjoyed at home; nay, reflecting that the meanest servant in his father's house was plentifully supplied, had bread enough and to spare, while he, the once-favoured happy son, was ready to perish with hunger, he deeply felt and lamented his folly and guilt. The remembrance of his father's kindness touched his heart; while the recollection of his own base ingratitude, filled him with remorse and shame. But in the midst of these distressing thoughts, a ray of hope broke in. The very remembrance of his father's kindness, which pierced him to the soul, yet raised an idea in his mind, that possibly he might yet receive him, and at least might save him from perishing. This idea, once raised, is cherished as his only hope. He says, 'I will arise and go to my father.' 'I will acknowledge my transgressions, I will confess my unworthiness. I cannot dare to ask that he will receive me as his son; but peradventure, he may put me among his hired servants.' And he arose and went. The way was long. He had come into a far country. He was ill provided for the journey, and would be forced to beg his bread on the road. As he drew nearer home, doubts and fears would greatly increase and agitate him. Shame would often be ready to stop him and turn him back. The dread of the ridicule which his present appearance would excite in those, who had known him in his better days, would often cause him to falter by the way—Above all, the apprehension of his father's just reproaches, the thoughts of his angry countenance, would at times fill him with dismay and terror. But still, if he go not forward, whither can he go? If his father, his father once so loving and so kind, will not receive him, who will receive him?—Can it be possible that such a father should not receive him? These thoughts again revive his spirits: and with trembling steps, and an anxious heart he still pursues his journey." pp. 187—189.

3. The impressiveness with which solemn truths are inculcated.

"The day here meant is the day so frequently mentioned in Scripture; and in which we are all most deeply concerned. It is described by many different names, as 'the day of judgment,' 'the day of the Lord,' 'the last day,' 'the day of wrath,' 'the day in which God will judge the world.' In fact, it is that great and terrible day, when we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive the awful sentence, which will for ever assign us to the habitation of unspeakable happiness or misery. It is that day 'in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.' It is that day, 'in which the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel; and to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe:—that day in which he will 'descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and the trump of God,' and 'will sit on the throne of his glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations:—that day in the which 'all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.' A day thus awfully distinguished; a day, on which events thus infinitely momentous are dependant; a day, which will be to every one of us the end of time, and the beginning of eternity, may with reason be justly called *that* day: for it is a day which ought to be deeply fixed on our minds, and ever uppermost in our thoughts. Such is the day here meant; a day, which is fast approaching; which every hour brings nearer; and of which no wit, nor wisdom, nor power of ours can prevent or delay the coming. In that day then what will be our only consolation and security? The text reminds us, 'to find mercy of the Lord.' " pp. 215—217.

4. The forcible use of simple argumentation.

"In the first place, the *perfections of God* absolutely forbid that sin should go unpunished. God is *present* at *all times* and in *every place*. He filleth all in all. Nothing therefore can be hidden from him. No sin, however secretly committed, or studiously concealed, is unseen by him.—He is also *perfect in knowledge*, and knoweth

all things. He therefore remembereth all things. Men forget their sins: but they cannot be forgotten by God—God is also *holy*. He is 'of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity.' As such then He must hate sin. It must be infinitely offensive to Him.—Further, God is most *just*. He loveth righteousness, and executeth judgment. As a righteous Judge then, He cannot but be concerned to punish sin: for not to punish it would be unjust. It would not be to treat sin according to its deserts, which would be injustice. Besides, God is true and faithful to his word. He is *truth* itself, and cannot lie. How is it possible then that he should not punish sin, for he hath declared that he will punish it, that he 'will by no means clear the guilty?'—Put all these things together. God sees sin: He remembers sin: He hates sin: He cannot be just without punishing sin: and He has said that He will punish it. With what certainty do these perfections of the Almighty declare, that a man's sin will surely find him out! Only let us consider, that, to entertain the contrary presumption; to suppose that sin will escape unpunished, is in fact to strike at the root of the Divine character, to deny one at least, if not all of the glorious perfections of the Godhead. To say, that our sin will not find us out is to say, either that God does not see sin; or that He will forget it; or that he does not hate it; or that He is unjust; or that He will not keep his word. And which of these things will a man presume to say? Or which of them, if he did presume to say it, would be true? God, in his very nature must be infinite in all his perfections: and so surely as He is so, so surely, unrepented, unpardoned sin will not go unpunished." pp. 250—252.

We cannot take our leave of Mr. Cooper without requesting him to accept our acknowledgments for the pleasure, and, we trust, instruction, which his volume of sermons has afforded us. He enjoys, we doubt not, in the testimony of his own conscience and in the humble assurance that his labours are graciously accepted and will be finally recompensed by Him to whom they are consecrated, a satisfaction unspeakably superior to that which any tribute, however sincere, from us can yield him. We trust, however, that he

will allow us to suggest to him, and will not disregard the suggestion, that he cannot, perhaps, more effectually promote the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, than by continuing to disseminate, through the medium of sermons, such as those we have now been reviewing, the undisguised and unadulterated truths of our holy religion.

Jephthah: a Poem, (which won the Seatonian Prize for the Year 1814.)

By EDWARD SMEDLEY, Jun. London, Murray; and Cambridge, Deighton.

THE first and instinctive idea which the expression *prize-poetry* excites in the mind is, that of distinguished excellence. But most poetic readers have, in so many cases, experienced the fallacy of this idea—their expectations of distinguished excellence in productions of this class have so often been disappointed—they have so frequently laid hold of a prize-poem, and found a prize no where but in the title-page—that the very name of prize-poetry seems now to be regarded rather with prejudice than favour. It is looked upon as another phrase for decent mediocrity and unoffending tameness, and proscribed accordingly by virtue of the authority of Horace. And, as a reason must be given for every thing in this reasoning age, men soon discover that all this is very natural; for true poetic genius is above prizes and prize-poems. It will not condescend to take task-work for hire. It shrinks from the idea of labouring on a set subject for pay. It requires no leading but that of its own enthusiasm, no spur but the desire of fame.

And yet these opinions must seem very dubious to those who

will take the trouble to reflect that some of the most celebrated poems in our language have been written, not for fame, but for bread; that the tragedians whose sublime productions immortalized the theatre of Athens, were regular prize-fighters; and, what is still more remarkable, that the greatest, the most finely moral, and the most boldly fanciful lyricist of antiquity, wrote his noblest compositions as mere tasks, with no better a subject than a horse race; and was as regularly paid for his work, by the piece, as any wonder-maker who scrawls for a country magazine.

The truth is, that though genius cannot be created, it may be excited and directed. Accident, occasion, necessity, example, a prescribed subject, a proposed reward—all and each of these may be the rousers and the feeders of that ethereal flame. They do not give it birth, any more than flint gives birth to fire; but they elicit it, and call it into sight and into action. It is indeed the very property of strong powers, that they thus adapt themselves to the given opportunity, and, under the pressure of an external impulse, move with all the ease, grace, spirit, and decision of self-directed and gratuitous exertion. If prize-poems are seldom of great excellence, we should remember that they generally come out of a limited field. The candidates for any one scholastic or academic honour are necessarily but a few,—too few to be sure of containing a good poet amongst their number. And, after all, the great use of the poetic prizes at our public seminaries is not so much to call into existence poetry of rare and extraordinary merit, as to promote among the students the practice of a species of composition which tends to store the mind with rich and elegant ideas, and to give command of language and refinement of style.

There have not been wanting, how-
Christ. Observ. No. 161.

ever, productions which have amply and nobly redeemed the reproach that has been conceived to attach to academic prize-poetry. Some of these we have formerly pointed out to the notice of our readers, and, if our criticisms are by this time forgotten, it is not so with the works that excited them. Had our critical labours commenced a few years earlier, other subjects of similar praise would have come within our view; nor, on the whole, can it be doubted that, if the *élite* of English prize-poems were collected together into a single work, the collection would be highly interesting, and of positive and great, though certainly various, excellence.

The poem now before us might, we think, not unjustly claim admission into such a collection. The Seatonian prize has not often been adjudged to so good a composition. The writer discovers fancy, feeling, considerable conception of character, and great command of poetic language. Without venturing on any flagrant departure from the simple history of Scripture, he has filled up the short outline of the account of Jephthah with genius and dexterity, and has given his portrait, although necessarily but the copy of a copy, much of the spirit and freedom of an original.

Some few objections, with which we shall take the liberty of qualifying this praise, will fall from us in the progress of our remarks. Mean time, we may offer one general observation, leaving our readers to reflect whether it implies more of censure or of commendation,—that the muse of Mr. Smedley is, in her generic character, considerably *Byronian*. We here mean to speak of her literary, not her moral, character. The great success and unquestionable merit of Lord Byron could not fail to make him the founder of a school; and though, before the recent publication of the Hebrew Melodies,

we might not exactly have expected to find a writer on scriptural subjects among the number of his disciples; yet there could be no doubt that some of the noble poet's most striking peculiarities of manner were very capable of being transferred into sacred ground. We are far from denying Mr. Smedley the praise of originality; but there is something in the general air and cast of his writing which certainly bespeaks him the delighted reader, though not the servile imitator, of Lord Byron; and proofs of this fact will cursorily appear in the sequel.

The opening lines, though here and there a little wordy, are very beautiful, and can scarcely fail to attract the attention of the most unpoetic reader:—

"From the dim east no vermeil tint was
flung,
Though thrice the bird of dawn his carol
sung;
Though Light already on Amana's hill
Pois'd her fleet pinion, all was darkness
still.
For there no herald star with doubtful
blaze
Pours shadow'd brightness from his dewy
rays;
Nor, as with us, soft-stealing on the sight,
The gradual landscape mellows into light;
Till Morn, all kerchief'd in her virgin gray,
Glow with meek smile, and blushes into
Day.
But Morning there with hurried foot-
steps leads
To the dark goal her fiery-harness'd steeds;
Springs with one bound above the aston-
ish'd sky,
Pours forth her rushing wheels, and waves
her torch on high.
Lo! ere the tongue can speak, on Her-
mon's brow,
Where all was darkness, all is glory now:
Swift, as when first he rose, the trackless
Sun
Burst from the deep, and morn and noon
was one:
Fiercely he glanc'd with broad and level
beam
On the green bank of Jaboth's mountain
stream;

And shook his ocean-dropping tresses wide
On reddened Shenim's balm-distilling side."
pp. 1, 2.

Mr. Smedley, in his notes, very candidly remarks, that the sun-rise here described is, perhaps, rather that of the tropics than of Palestine, where, however, the transition from utter darkness to light is much more rapid than in our own climate. The passage will probably remind the reader of the simile in Mr. Walter Scott's *Rokeby*, where Bertram, anticipating his tragically glorious end, finely compares it to the abrupt and fiery setting of a tropical sun.

"No pale gradations quench his ray;
No cooling dews his wrath allay;
With disk like battle-target red,
He rushes to his burning bed,
Dyes the wide wave with bloody light,
Then sinks at once,—and all is night."
Cant. 6.

Day having thus broke, the multitudes of Mizpeh pour into the streets; for this was the morning on which Jephthah, victorious over the Ammonites, was about to make his triumphal entry. The action of the poem could not have commenced better; and the scene of the populace crowded and wedged together in delighted expectancy of the procession of their deliverer, is described with great vivacity.

"Where the wide roofs their level course
expand
In terrac'd row the expectant gazers stand:
O'er every porch and lattic'd arch below
Rich silken webs and blazon'd ensigns
flow:
Here odorous woods their crackling fra-
grance blend,
There from the censers perfum'd clouds
ascend;
And scatter'd o'er the flowery-broidered
streets
The rose and lotus breathe their mingled
sweets.
Aloft on minaret, and tower, and keep,

The climbing rabble mount some giddy
steep;
Each broken arch, o'erhanging and alone,
Where the quick foot scarce brush'd the
loosen'd stone;
Each ledge on which the rapid hand might
twine
Some weed, and catch a momentary line;
Each height which Danger scarce would
dare to brave
To the bold throng its venturous eyrie
gave.
The pines high quivering o'er the peopled
gate
Droop'd their choak'd boughs with un-
accustom'd weight;
From every limb the living clusters hung,
And crown'd their giddy spires, or from
their branches clung.
Thence far beneath the wonder-stricken
eye
Might one vast sea of waving heads des-
cry;
While the low hum which upward rose
might seem
The uncertain murmur of some fancied
stream.
For there by nimble-footed youth was led
Gray Age slow-faltering in his palsied
tread;
There in the midmost press, the mother
bore
Her infant charge, and held it up before;
And as a second prattler by her ran,
Bade him remember this, when grown a
man.
There Sickness ceas'd to languish, Grief
was free,
And those came forth to smile, who could
not see."

pp. 3, 4.

After our readers have contem-
plated this lively sketch, it may,
perhaps, amuse them to see a de-
lineation of a similar scene from
another hand. We certainly pay
our present author no ill compli-
ment in selecting this parallel from
an artist whom we so highly esteem
as Mr. Southey. Possibly the pas-
sage we are about to quote never
came under Mr. Smedley's eye.
The resemblance between the two
is certainly not greater than must
almost necessarily have been occa-
sioned by the similarity of their
subjects.

"What spectacle invites
The growing multitude,
That torrent-like they roll along!
Boys and gray-headed age; the mother
comes,
Leading her child, who, at arm's length
Outstripping her, looks back
And bids her hasten more.
Why does the city pour her thousands
fourth?
What glorious pageantry
Makes her streets desolate?.....
On the house-tops and in the windows
rang'd
Face above face, they wait
The coming spectacle;
The trees are cluster'd; and, below, the
dust
Through the throng'd populace
Can find no way to rise.
He comes! the Sultan! hark the swelling
horn,
The trumpet's spreading blair,
The timbrel tinkling as its silver bells
Twinkle aloft, and the shrill cymbal's
sound,
Whose broad brass flashes in the morning
sun
Accordant light and music! Closing all,
The heavy gong is heard,
That falls like thunder on the dizzy ear.
On either hand the thick-wedg'd crowd
Fall from the royal path.
Recumbent in the palanquin he casts
On the wide tumult of the waving throng
A proud and idle eye."

Thalaba, Book IX.

Apart from the throng that crowd-
ed the streets, one damsel awaited
in her paternal palace the arrival of
the conqueror. It was by inadver-
tence, probably, that Mr. Smedley
called this maiden *solitary*, since he
afterwards describes her as sur-
rounded by a bevy of attendant
nymphs, whom she marshals in a
festal dance. But she expected the
moment of joyful congratulation
with far deeper feelings than the
gay and gazing multitude:—

"Think ye on her the morn unwish'd
for smiled
Which told a father's glory to his child!"
p. 5.

The introduction of this fair person gives the author an opportunity of trying his powers in one of the highest and most interesting departments of poetic portraiture—the delineation of character. The description is long, and is moreover broken by some reflections which are delivered obscurely, and do not seem conceived or executed in the happiest taste. We will not, therefore, transcribe the passage at length; but the extracts which we shall give may convey to the reader an adequate idea of the whole.

"His child—her father:—in those holy ties

Were centred all her bosom's sympathies:

Unus'd to kindle at a softer flame,
She knew none sweeter than a father's name;

Untaught a keener, warmer glow to prove,
She sought none dearer than a father's love." p. 5.

"That eye so rapt, it almost seems to share
Part of the heaven which it sues in pray'r;
Those lips where silence eloquently dwells,

And all the bosom's fulness mutely tells;
The mingled look of fervor, and of calm,
The knee meek-bending, and the clasped palm;

Such is the scene which when the heart o'erflows

The cherish'd privacy of rapture knows;
Such are the cares which in her hour of joy,

That Maiden's solitary thoughts employ.
Brief was her orison, and when her pray'r
To heaven arose not, still her thoughts were there:

So pure her spirit that it seem'd to hold
No gross communion with its fleshly mould,
But spotless, chaste, and undefil'd within,
Breath'd all its first immortal origin;
Bright as when heaven's own image gave it birth,

And earthly sent without one stain of earth." pp. 6, 7.

"Though bright the charms which youth may round her throw,
Another tint will heighten all their glow;
The master touch which Nature's hand must give

To wake her inmost soul, and bid the statue live.

As yet her eye where wonder prompts or chance,

Scatters abroad its ever-changing glance;
Knows not with drooping lid to quench its blaze,

Nor shrinks as conscious, from another's gaze.

As yet a smile which innocence might wear,

Plays on her lip, and dwells delighted there;

Asks not for homage, spreads no curious wile,

Nor marks with heighten'd wreath an answering smile.

Yet lurks a spirit in that eye which seems
Though yet unawaken'd, powerful in its dreams;

And beams a lustre on her cheek which shows

How rich that cheek will be when once it glows.

Thus on the stem the budding fruits may cling,

Ere shed the blossom'd fragrance of their spring;

And as they mingle on the cluster'd tree,
Give promise fair what summer soon shall be." pp. 7, 8.

It will at once be perceived from these lines, that the author is by no means a mere hunter of common-places. He is not content with giving us an insipid representation, copied at the hundredth hand from his predecessors, or leisurly put together out of the "Elegant Extracts in Verse." Nor has he satisfied himself with a lifeless drawing of negative qualities, a colourless exhibition that leaves no trace on the mind. He has really attempted the description of a human being, and of one cast in the fairest mould of nature. Probably, also, the reader will agree with us that the execution of the idea is good, and, in some parts, extremely happy. But he will also agree with us in considering neither the idea nor the execution as altogether original. In effect, the

daughter of Jephthah seems to us modelled on the better heroines of Lord Byron. It is impossible to contemplate her without thinking of Zuleika and Medora, and even of some traces in the lady of the Giaour.

This resemblance may be thought matter of praise; but, from us, we confess that the praise would not be unmixed. Zuleika, indeed, is extremely captivating; and the daughter of Jephthah has some very delightful features; but, after all, one cannot suppress the idea that nothing but the respective untimely deaths of these interesting ladies prevented each of them from becoming a Medora—a character of much more questionable merit. Perhaps it is a purely fanciful idea; but we deceive ourselves if the whole cast of the female character suggested in the poems of the noble writer to whom we have alluded, is not of an *Oriental* kind. His is a heroine in the Turkish style, though with a refinement stolen from the West. She is beautiful, playful, fond, languishing, constant, and (if young) pure as the light; a being formed to love and to obey. She is a child; and, therefore, while really a child, like the Bride of Abydos, delightful; but we miss something beyond; we miss that ennobling delicacy, that shrinking self-respect, that dignified and principled purity, which constitute the highest and the most interesting charm "of beauty's powerful glance." We miss the qualities that become the chosen companion of a rational and immortal being. The poetic heroine of the writer in question has no soul, except for love—almighty love. She is, after all, a "gem of Giamschid," an exquisite play-thing.

The concluding lines of the passage we have quoted from Mr. Smedley are entirely formed on a similar idea of the female character, and (with some others which we have not been anxious to include

in our extract) seem to us very exceptionable. The great merit of several of them (for we could point out couplets that are really of the highest merit) does not compensate for the radical deficiency of the sentiment. As yet, the young lady described was smiling and light of heart; but, it seems, the days of love and coquetry are at hand; and then adieu to smiles and light-heartedness, which must now be exchanged for a higher and brighter order of beauty. Is it not the best thing we can suppose of such a sentiment, that it is absolute and unmixed nonsense?

From the portrait of Jephthah's daughter we pass to that of the hero himself; and here also we shall find the general feature of the Byronian school; but with a proper softening, and with a better excuse than before. What is recorded in the sacred pages of the person described, very well agrees with the fuller and more minute description of Mr. Smedley. He has by no means violated the outline in filling it up; nor has he at all changed the essential and predominant character as it came to his hands. He has given it great prominence and expression, however; and we cannot therefore but think highly of the skill with which, availing himself of a few dispersed hints, he has produced a portrait so energetic, yet so little different from his authority. Jephthah was reproached for his birth, and was driven by his brethren into a strange land; where certain "vain men," supposed by the commentators to be roving Arabs, were gathered to him, and went out with him. He was also, in scriptural language, "a mighty man of valour." From these slight notices, taken in connection with the briefly-told history of his return, his victory, and his vow, the author has developed a full and a tragically-interesting picture. We cannot give the entire passage; but shall extract what may convey a just notion of it,

without mangling the effect of the whole on those who may hereafter read the poem itself.

"Loud swells to heaven the exulting rabble's throat,
Where Gilead's twin and victor banners float;
And louder still the shouts of triumph rose,
When Jephthah rein'd his steed before the pageant's close.

"Not long the stranger's shrinking gaze could brook
The mingled pride and fierceness of his look;
His every eye, whose restless beams betray
Power, but not the majesty, of sway;
His smile, which ever smil'd in bitter mirth
To rage high, and ancestry, and birth.
He, self-exalted, isolate, alone,
And lord of glories which were all his own,
His will his charter, his right hand the claim
Which gave him station, honour, place, and fame.
The blazon'd roll of vaunted sires despis'd,
And laugh'd, and pointed to the sword he priz'd.

"Yet the dim trace of sadness stamp'd his brow,
And shadow'd sorrows scarce remembered now:
Somewhat of shame it told, but more of wrong
Felt to the inmost core, and suffer'd long;
Of fail'd ambition, and of baffled pride
Which champ'd the foaming bit it fain would hide.
A breast which injury had mail'd in steel,
A heart so deeply wrung it dar'd not feel." pp. 11, 12.

The author proceeds to describe his hero ruling a band of outlaws on the borders of Arabia; and then paints the effect produced on his rugged mind, by one solitary sentiment of tenderness and fond iniquitude, parental attachment to an only and an interesting daughter. This single feeling softened his stern nature, gave an interest to his apparently dark destinies, and whispered, that there was something for which he yet might live.

"Then would he shrink convuls'd, and haply weep
Tears such as Valour's rugged cheeks may steep:
The few big drops which only fall from high
When the pent thunder chafes the unwilling sky.

"The wish'd-for season comes; with humbled brow
Manasseh's elders at his footstool bow;
Hail him their judge, their captain, and their lord,
And sue his aid, and barter for his sword.
There too with suppliant knee his brothers throng'd,
And crouch'd before him, as they once had wrong'd:
Proffer'd his goodly heritage, and gave
Such low obeisance as befits a slave.
High beat his bosom then—the bitter smile
Which rose to spurn their flattery, and revile;
The glance of scorn his eye already flung,
The taunt which almost quiver'd on his tongue—
Where are they now?—Revenge is lost in shade;
Ambition's mighty debt is more than paid.
On his curl'd lip the unfinished mockery died,
And struggling Nature sank subdued by Pride.
He wish'd not that their searching eye should know
How deadly once his heart had felt their blow:
He scorn'd that they, whom danger forc'd to bring
Balm to his wounds, should boast they gave the sting." pp. 13, 14.

Perhaps this spirited passage may be thought to exhibit one slight exception to the general concurrence of Mr. Smedley's narration with the scriptural account. In the original, "Jephthah said unto the children of Gilead, Did not ye hate me and expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress?" These words, however, do not necessarily imply the taunt and the mockery which Mr. Smedley tells us the illustrious exile suppressed.

The meeting of Jephthah with his daughter, the poet has well described; and the confusion and despair of the chief, when, with thoughts full of the dignity to which he was about to raise the object of all his affections, he suddenly encounters her, and his vow at the same moment flashes on his mind. After this, a difficult task remained—the description of the fatal sacrifice. Mr. Smedley conceived it to be clear, that, "for all poetical purposes, it was far more sublime to consider, that Jephthah offered his daughter as a living victim on the altar, than that he devoted her to perpetual virginity." The scriptural account being doubtful, it was perhaps very competent to the poet to adopt the supposition he preferred; but we are not sure, that the grounds of our author's preference are as indisputable as he seems to imagine. Waving, however, all discussion on this point, it seems surprising that he should not have acted a little more effectually on his own idea. After dwelling on the horror of Jephthah at the sight of his daughter, he pauses abruptly, overleaps all the rest of her history, and makes a sudden descent of about three thousand years. A *modern pilgrim* is introduced, travelling through the Holy Land, under the conduct of a "turban'd guide," who shews the Christian the tomb of Jephthah, shortly alludes to the tragical story connected with that name, hints at the ghosts that are in the habit of haunting the spot, and utters a Mohammedan prayer for the safety of himself and his charge. The general idea given of the sepulchral scenery that surrounds the travellers is happy, and the delineation is forcible and picturesque; but it will not supply what is wanting. We remember no other instance in which a poem, not deliberately professing itself a fragment, ventured on leaving so much to the imagination.

Perhaps our author could not

satisfy himself in his attempts to describe the subject, and, after what he conceived to be repeated failures, at last fairly resolved on evading a difficulty which he could not surmount. But, if the omission was deliberate, he surely must have forgotten that the imagination of a reader is stimulated, not by absolute concealment, but by half-disclosures; by partial discoveries, and mysterious intimations. On any other principle, all descriptive poetry would soon be reduced to a blank. In one of his notes, Mr. Smedley alludes to the celebrated painting of the Sacrifice of Iphigenia. That memorable instance of skilful concealment might have afforded an useful lesson. The painter, Timanthes, gave an air of grief to all the countenances in his piece, but in different degrees, according to the respective intimacy of the characters with the family of Agamemnon. At length, he came to Menelaus, the uncle of the unhappy victim, and exhausted on him all his utmost power of graphic expression. The art could do no more;—he threw a veil over the face of the agonized father. The experiment was hazardous, but, by the concurring testimony of all antiquity, succeeded completely. Its success, however, evidently proceeded as much from what the artist disclosed as from what he concealed. Leading the imagination, stage by stage, from one degree of mournful expression to another, he at last left it but one step to make for itself. He *prompted* it, therefore (if we may so speak,) though he would not and could not tell it all. If Timanthes had covered all his faces, or if he had introduced but one figure—that of the afflicted Agamemnon—and, in despair of adequately representing the sorrows of a father, who had been compelled to be the executioner of his child, had enveloped the hero's countenance with a deep veil—can any thing be conceived

more ludicrous? Nothing, surely, but the practical wit of Hogarth, who exhibited a piece of canvas daubed with red paint as a historical picture of Pharaoh and his army, drowned in the Red Sea.

It is permitted to the lightest actor to make his exit at the last act gravely; and, perhaps, in taking our leave of this subject, we may be allowed to speak a little more than we have yet done in the character of the Christian Observer. We do not ask, what is the moral of this poem? A poem need not have any single moral. A sacred poem, however, should at least have a general and decided moral effect: it should be *redolent* of great truths, either insinuated or expressed. The Seatonian prize was, indeed, evidently instituted as an incentive to the production of *religious* poetry. The restriction must, of course, not be construed with an exclusive rigidity. We do not expect a Seatonian poem to be a sermon, though it certainly might be a much worse thing. But we may fairly expect that it shall generally tend to excite moral reflection, and religious feeling; and we cannot be of opinion, that the author before us has, in

this respect, sufficiently availed himself of the capabilities of his subject. There was room for a grave passing observation or two, to say the least, on the remarkable history which he was versifying: and something might have here and there appeared, that shewed him to be on sacred ground; some decided tokens might have been borne away of the favoured soil in which he was treading; some memorial of those "happy walks and shades, fit haunt of gods;" some blossoms culled from among those flowers,

"That never will in other climate grow."

The delightful composition of Mr. Heber on Palestine is a model in this point; and, should Mr. Smedley (as we hope) again enter the lists of Seatonian warfare, he will, we trust, lend himself a little more to the example of that truly sacred poem. Should these remarks chance to meet his eye, he will not, we are persuaded, understand them in an unfriendly sense. It is the real merit of his publication, which has induced us to bestow on it not only praise but blame. We find it so good, that we wish it perfect.

LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTELLIGENCE, &c. &c.

GREAT BRITAIN.

PREPARING for Publication: Robinson's Theological, Biblical, and Ecclesiastical Dictionary, on the Plan of Calmet's, but derived chiefly from Protestant Divines;—Annals of the Reign of George III. by Dr. Aiken;—A History of England (which is said to be in a considerable state of forwardness,) by Sir James Mackintosh;—An enlarged edition of Hutton's Mathematical Dictionary;—Hints addressed to the Patrons and Directors of Schools, by Miss Hamilton;—The White Doe of Rylston, a Poem, by Mr. Wordsworth;—The Lives of E. and J. Philipps, Nephews and Pupils of Milton, by Mr. Godwin;—The

Speeches of the Rt. Hon. C. J. Fox, from 1768 to 1806, with Memoirs &c. in 6 vols. octavo;—Select Beauties of British Poetry, with Lives of the Poets, by T. Campbell, Esq. Author of "The Pleasures of Hope," &c.;—History of the Kingdom of Cabul, by the Hon. Mr. Elphinstone;—The Travels of Ali Bey, 2 vols. quarto, 100 plates;—An Introduction to Entomology, by Rev. W. Kirby, B. A. F. R. S. and W. Spence, Esq. F. L. S.;—An Introduction to the Study of Conchology, by Sam. Brooks, Esq. F. L. S.;—Periodical Work on British Fossils, by Mr. Donovan;—Part I. of Flora Londinensis, by George Graves, F. L. S.;—Part I. Naval Re-

ecords, by Lieut. W. J. Pococke, with engravings from original designs by N. Pococke, Esq.;—Observations, &c. on Books and Men, by the late Rev. Joseph Spence, with Notes by Malone and Beloe;—Censura Literaria, or Titles, &c. of old scarce Books, by Sir Egerton Brydges, K. I.;—Exercises on Latin Prosody, by Valpy;—A new edition of Kett's Elements of useful Knowledge;—A new edition of Pinkard on the West Indies;—Scripture Biography, by Claude Fleury;—Memoirs of Oliver Cromwell and his Children, supposed to be written by himself;—Some Account of the late Rev. Thomas Robinson, by the Rev. E. T. Vaughan;—Elements of Chemical Science, by J. Murray;—Travels through Russia, Poland, &c. in the Tract of Bonaparte's Campaigns, with coloured engravings, by M. R. Johnston;—Reports on the Pestilential Fever in Spain, in 1810, by Sir J. Fellows;—A translation of Bichat's Anatomy;—An Answer to the Question "Why are you become a Christian?" by Christopher Leo.

The following attempt to account for the formation of bogs, such as those which abound in Ireland, is curious. Professor Davy is of opinion, that in many places where forests had grown undisturbed, the trees on the outside of the woods grew stronger than the rest, from their exposure to the air and sun; and that when mankind attempted to establish themselves near these forests, they cut down the large trees on their borders, which opened the internal part, where the trees were weak and slender, to the influence of the wind, which, as is commonly to be seen in such circumstances, had immediate power to sweep down the whole of the internal part of the forest. The large timber obstructed the passage of vegetable recrement, and of earth falling toward the rivers; the weak timber in the internal part of the forest, after it had fallen, soon decayed, and became the food of future vegetation.

The following fact is well worthy the attention of philosophers:—In 1755, a pond in the town of Luton in Bedfordshire, in which there had been but little water for some weeks, suddenly filled, and a copious sediment was thrown up from the bottom at the precise time of the earthquake at Lisbon, the water continuing to overflow for some hours, and then all remaining quiet as usual. Last Sept. the same pond in Luton began to overflow suddenly, which created alarm in the minds of the inhabitants, who apprehended that this circum-

stance was the indication of some earthquake on the Continent. This was afterwards known to have been the case.

Mr. Abraham Stern, of Dublin, has presented an arithmetical machine, which has engaged his labours during many years, and on which he performed several experiments in the presence of many spectators. The machine calculates, without assistance, whatever is desired in the four rules of arithmetic, in whole numbers and in fractions, in a more rapid manner than they can be done on paper: it requires no further knowledge than merely that of the value of figures. When this machine is prepared for operation, it proceeds as directed without further interference, and announces the result by the sound of a bell.

A new translation of the books of Moses is announced for publication at Freyberg, which appears to intend the combination of particulars dependant on the art of criticism, and requiring much skill in that art, with corresponding information and learning. It is proposed, as, 1. being more exact than any hitherto published; 2. as arranged according to the primitive order of the books; 3. cleared from apocryphal additions; 4. accompanied by remarks; 5. illustrated by additional matters, from subsequent revelations, &c. The Five Books of Moses divided into two historical books, and three books of laws:—

1. A book containing the history of the times anterior to Moses.
2. A book containing the history of his own time.
3. The code of moral laws.
4. ——— of religious laws.
5. ——— of civil laws.

Each of these books will be accompanied by proper documents. The whole will form nearly 3 vols. 8vo.

M. Desgenettes, the celebrated French Physician who accompanied the unfortunate army which penetrated into Russia, thus describes some of the phenomena which occurred among the troops, who were exposed to the intense cold, which was fatal to so many thousands, during the retreat from Moscow. The effects alluded to were perfectly new to M. Desgenettes, and will doubtless be equally so to our me-

dical readers. "I have heard of men," says this acute observer, "who were marching with every appearance of muscular energy, and with the most decided and soldier-like pace, suddenly complain that a thick veil was covering their eyes: those organs at first, for an instant, haggard, soon became immovable: all the muscular apparatus of the neck, and more particularly the sterno-cleido-mastoidean muscles became rigid, and gradually rivetted the head on the right or left shoulder: this rigidity next extended to the trunk; the lower extremities tottered, and the unhappy victim fell upon the snow, exhibiting, to complete the frightful picture, all the symptoms of catalepsy or epilepsy."

In the Wernerian Natural History Society at Edinburgh, has been read, a paper by Mr. Scoresby, containing a plan for visit-

ing the North Pole, by means of *trainaux*.

The *Urtica Whitlowi*, a new species of plant, as a substitute for hemp and flax, has been lately exhibited to a great number of the Members of the House of Commons. It was brought from Canada by Mr. Whitlow. It promises to be of considerable value.

The subject of the Seatonian Poem, this year, at Cambridge, is "Jonah."

A very interesting Memoir of Count Rumford, was read by Cuvier to the French Institute, Jan 9, 1815, and which, for the encouragement of those who need stimulating to perseverance in well-doing, we should be glad to see widely circulated in this kingdom.

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THEOLOGY.

A Sermon preached before the University of Oxford, by Richard Lawrence, L.L.D. Regius Professor of Hebrew. 2s.

Sermons chiefly on Devotional Subjects, by Rev. Archibald Bonar. 8vo. 10s. 6d.

Letters to the Right Rev. Bishop of London, by Thomas Belsham. 3s. 6d.

The Book of Psalms, translated from the Hebrew, with Notes by Samuel Horsely, L.L.D. late Lord Bishop of St. Asaph.

An Account of the Abolition of Female Infanticide, by the Rev. John Cormack, A. M. Minister of Stow. 10s. 6d.

A Sermon, being a Sequel to one preached at Oxford, 1790, by the Bishop of St. David's. 1s.

Discourses on the Evidences of the Jewish and Christian Revelation, by Sir H. Moncrieff Welwood. 12s.

Sermon on the Death of the Rev. Noah Hill, by J. Hooper, A. M. 1s. 6d.

A Memorial on behalf of the native Irish, with a View to their Improvement through the Medium of their own Language, by C. Anderson, Edin. 2s. 6d.

Sermons on the most important Doctrines of the Gospel, by the Rev. J. Thornton, 1 vol. 8vo. 4s.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Journal of a Mission to the Interior of

Africa, in the Year 1805, by Mungo Park, &c.—to which is prefixed a Life of Mr. Park, 4to. 1l. 11s. 6d.

A Selection of Hebrew Melodies, by Braham—the Poetry, by Lord Byron, No. 1. 21s.

A Geological Essay, by J. Kidd, Professor of Chemistry in the University of Oxford, 8vo. 9s.

The Cambridge University Calendar, 12mo. 5s. 6d.

Letters from an Officer in the North of Scotland, to his Friend in England, referred to in Waverley, 2 vols. 8vo. 15s.

A Grammar of the English Language, by the Rev J Sutcliffe. 12mo. 3s. 6d.

Eutropius, with English Notes and Questions for the Use of Schools; and also a Series of Exercises, designed as a Guide to Parsing: by the Rev. C. Bradley.

The New General Atlas, on a Scale similar to that of D'Anville's. No. 9. 8s.

England at the Beginning of the nineteenth Century; by M. de Levis, Peer and Duke of France. Vol. I. 12s.

A practical Guide to the Duties of an Overseer, by William Soone. 8vo. 5s. 6d.

A Sketch of the New Anatomy of Gale and Spurzheim, by Thomas Forster. F. L. S. 5s.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

ANNIVERSARIES OF RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES IN THE METROPOLIS.

It would be very difficult indeed, to convey any adequate conception of the

degree of religious feeling and benevolence, which have displayed themselves in the anniversaries of the various religious societies, which have been celebrated since we last addressed our-

selves to our readers. Nor would it be possible, in our limited space, to give at the present moment, though we hope to do it by degrees, any such account of these meetings as could be at all commensurate, either to the dignity of the subject, or to the desire of our readers. The British and Foreign Bible Society—the Church Missionary Society—the London Society for the Conversion of the Jews—the Homily Society—all celebrated their anniversaries in the first week of May: various Sermons also were preached for these institutions; and in every instance, as far as we had an opportunity of judging, the ardour and the spirit of the various assemblies were such as to afford the strongest reason for gratitude and joy. Indeed we are disposed to think, that the friends of religion had never before such obvious cause for mutual congratulation, and for thankfulness to the Great Author of all good, as on the present occasion. For, in the first place, each of these societies seemed materially to have gained ground: and, secondly, the meetings were distinguished by a peculiar solemnity and spirituality of character. Scarcely the slightest mixture of levity disturbed those deep-toned feelings of gratitude and devotion, which such meetings are calculated to awaken. And wherever the string of controversy was touched, it was with the tenderness of men who rather pitied their opponents than hated them. Our sincere conviction is, that opposition would, in very few instances, survive the attendance upon these anniversaries, and that those who “came to scoff” would stay to pray.”

For the present, we shall not attempt to enter into details upon these points. We will only call upon our readers to unite with us in devout thanks to God, for having lighted up this holy flame upon our own shores, and in supplication, that it may soon light the skies and warm the atmosphere of other countries. There is at the present awful moment a sort of melancholy consolation in remembering the particular period in which these various societies began to exist. All came into being during the late war. They sprang, as it were, full armed out of the head of “the Thunderer.” Thus nursed and cradled amidst scenes of contest, we seem to have ground for hoping, that under the Divine blessing, the new war with which we are threatened, may not materially injure their growth and prosperity.

It is one of the few mitigations of the horrors of war, that it has a tendency, under God, to produce that seriousness and tenderness of mind which are the parents of all great and manly qualities. The most prosperous are rarely the most benevolent. As it was a poor widow who cast her last mite into the treasury, so nations which are bleeding under the visitations of war often stoop the most readily to bind up the wounds of others. We will freely confess, that even during the short interval of peace, we had begun to discover in some small degree, in the aspect of the nation, the consequences of the removal of that sort of pressure which had so long assisted to keep down the levity of the public mind. It may now perhaps be the design of Providence not to intrust us with peace, till we are better qualified for enjoying it. At all events, it is our duty and interest to endeavour to deprive war of a part of its evil, by striving to render it an instrument of moral good.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

The Eleventh Annual Meeting of this Society was held at Freemasons' Hall, on Wednesday, the 3d of May. At twelve o'clock, his Lordship, the President, took the chair, and, with the occasional assistance of the Rev. William Dealtry, read to the Meeting the principal parts of the Report; it being found necessary, from the great extension of the Society's exertions during the year, to reserve many of the details for the press.

It appeared from the Report, that the issue of copies of the Scriptures from March 31, 1814, to March 31, 1815, had been

126,156 Bibles | 123,776 Testaments;

making a total issued from the commencement of the Institution to that period, of

516,479 Bibles | 718,778 Testaments;

in all, 1,235,257 copies, exclusive of a very considerable number circulated at the charge of the Society abroad.

The receipts of the year have been,

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| Annual Subscriptions | £ | 3272 | 10 | 6 |
| Donations and Life do. | | 2429 | 9 | 11 |
| Congregational Collections | | 1406 | 7 | 8 |
| Forward | | 7108 | 8 | 1 |

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| Brought forward | £ 7,108 | 8 | 1 |
| Legacies | 1,312 | 18 | 0 |
| Dividends, &c. | 1,703 | 10 | 0 |
| Contributions from Aux. Soci- eties | 61,848 | 11 | 9 |
| Sale of Bibles and Testaments, the greater part of which were purchased by Bible Associations | 27,560 | 6 | 5 |
| Sale of Reports, &c. | 361 | 1 | 3 |
| | 27,921 | 7 | 8 |
| Total | 99,894 | 15 | 6 |

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| The expenditure of the year | 81,021 | 12 | 5 |
| Obligations of the Society, including orders given for Bibles and Testaments, about | 38,000 | 0 | 0 |

The Report having been read, his Lordship, after stating that the Lord Bishop of Salisbury would have attended, but for urgent business, and the Lord Bishop of Cloyne but for sickness, addressed the Meeting with his accustomed judgment and piety,—asserting, in strong terms, the elevation of the Society above all interference with the politics of the world, and its proposal to all the friends of man, to unite in one common effort of mercy. “Wherever,” said his Lordship, “the British and Foreign Bible Society moves, it confers and it receives blessings. It is holy in its object: it is pure in its means: and it is charitable in its ends:—for its object is, the glory of God; its means, the Bible; and its end, the temporal and eternal welfare of all mankind.”

The Dean of Wells (now Bishop of Gloucester,) in moving the adoption of the Report, took an able survey of the great efforts and the future prospects of the Society; and especially congratulated the Meeting that Britain had communicated to restored Holland the blessing of a sacred zeal for diffusing the Scriptures—a country from which she herself had received the restorer of her civil and religious liberties. He feelingly adverted to the President’s early and long connection with the East, and the delight with which his Lordship must have read that portion of the Report which stated the successful operations of the Society in India—a country deeply indebted to his Lordship for much of what it now enjoys.

Edward Stackhouse, Esq. one of the Vice-Presidents of the Cornwall Auxiliary Society, having, in a few expressive words, seconded the motion of the Dean of Wells, the Report was unanimously adopted.

The Rev. Mr. Kierulf, Minister of the Danish Church in London, gratefully expressed the thanks of his country for the benefits conferred on it by the Society. He stated, that nearly all the people in Denmark can read; and that a Bible Society was wanted to furnish them with the Scriptures, for the establishment of which they were indebted to the example and encouragement of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent while he thought himself called on to listen rather to those clergymen who had uttered such pious sentiments as he had just heard from the Rev. Dean, did not think it derogatory to one who had the honour to be a soldier to say, that the knowledge and use of the Bible is the best support of a soldier in the field. The soldier who mounts the breach with the almost certainty of meeting death, or those wounds which may lead to death, will do his duty with courage, when he feels that he is obeying that book which commands the steady and faithful discharge of every duty, and which opens to the Christian immortality beyond the grave.

Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, Bart. in a very pleasing manner seconded the Royal Duke’s motion of thanks to the noble President of the Society.

Robert H. Inglis, Esq. in moving thanks to the Vice-Presidents, paid a most feeling tribute to the memory of the late Treasurer of the Society, Henry Thornton, Esq. He urged the extension of Bible Associations, by the consideration, that if but one person in thirty could be induced to contribute his weekly penny, a sum of 100,000*l.* would be secured annually to the Society.

The Rev. Dr. Collyer, in seconding thanks to the Vice-Presidents, repelled the insinuation that the Members of the Society had entered into a conspiracy against the Establishment and the State:—a “conspiracy, at the head of which,” said he, “I find their Royal Highnesses the Dukes of York, of Kent, of Cumberland, of Sussex, and of Cambridge;—a conspiracy, in which I see combined the Right Rev. Prelates of Norwich, of St David’s, and many others;—a conspiracy in which I see the liberator of Africa, and the pacificator of America;—a conspiracy, in which the Opposition and the Ministry are agreed;—a conspiracy never to be overthrown by that mode of attack

1815.]
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The Bishop of Norwich, in proposing thanks to the Royal Dukes for their continued patronage, paid a warm tribute of respect to his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent in particular, for his support of many charitable Institutions, and especially of the Bible Society. His Lordship observed; "If we did not but too well know that Prejudice has neither eye nor ear, it would be difficult to conceive how this Institution could find an enemy in this country. Yet we have found an enemy: who, by aid of distorted facts, ill supported by inconclusive reasoning, has succeeded in raising suspicion, in some quarters, against the Society. I am happy to say, that a Reverend Friend near me has within these few days published an answer, which, if it do not make a convert of every man in the kingdom, will at least secure us from the attacks of ignorance, prejudice, or malevolence."

Rev. Mr. Hawtrey, in seconding the Bishop, gratefully acknowledged his obligations to his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, when serving under him at Gibraltar; and feelingly expressed his delight in now beholding him, not only the protector of the widow and the orphan, but the patron of the outcasts of Israel, and the friend of the Bible. When in the army himself, he had been led to the knowledge of a Saviour by the means of the Bible alone, and he could not but heartily congratulate the Society on its successful labours.

Robert Grant, Esq. traced, in a most forcible and eloquent manner, the importance which the objects of the Society derived from a comparison with the fleeting and changing scenes of the world; and paid a highly affecting tribute to the memory of departed friends of the Society—of Professor Jowett—of the Rev. Thomas Charles—of the Rev. Dr. Buchanan—of the Rev. Dr. Brunnmark—of the Rev. David Brown—of the Rev. Henry Martyn—and of Henry Thornton, Esq. "And as the march of a victorious army," said he, "may be traced by the graves of its heroes, so may the swift progress of the Bible Society be marked by the tombs of these its friends which rise, some of them, in far distant regions of the earth, and which connect this Institution with the remotest regions."

The Rev. Dr. Thorpe, as the representative of the Hibernian Bible Society, com-

municated much important information respecting the progress of that Institution. Before the establishment of the Society, the Scriptures could be purchased only in a few principal towns of Ireland, at a high price: now the Society has opened depositories for their sale in more than a hundred towns. Dr. Thorpe stated many interesting facts, in proof of the increasing demand for the Scriptures throughout Ireland, and even among the Roman Catholics themselves.

Mr. Wilberforce, in moving thanks to the Treasurer, Mr. John Thornton, bore also a most affecting testimony to his lamented predecessor. His long friendship revived recollections which almost overwhelmed him. He eloquently traced the delight of such meetings as contrasted with those jarring and tumultuous meetings which he had often to attend.

The Right Hon. Lord Headley having seconded Mr. Wilberforce,

Mr. John Thornton, in acknowledging the thanks of the Meeting, expressed himself persuaded that the Society would rejoice to hear that the word of God, which, in the minor as well as the greater concerns of life, had been the guide of his honoured relative, was his support in the hour of death, and is now the consolation of his widow and family.

Thanks to the Secretaries being moved by John Thornton, Esq; the Rev. Peter Roe, Minister of St. Mary's, Kilkenny, in seconding the motion, assured the Meeting that a great moral improvement had taken place within a short period in Ireland, chiefly by the circulation of the Scriptures; and stated some affecting proofs of the influence of superstition over the minds of multitudes.

The Rev C. F. A. Steinkopff expressed his gratitude to the Society for the kind notice taken of his labours; but more especially his unfeigned thankfulness to Him, who had deemed him worthy to be employed in so noble a work.

The Rev. Joseph Hughes earnestly wished that his claims were but equal to the expression of the thanks of the Meeting. If he could in any manner assist the deliberations of the Committee, or promote by journeying in summer, or in winter, the objects of the Society, he trusted he should ever remain their willing servant.

The Rev. John Owen apologized for the Secretaries occupying but a short portion of the important time of the Meeting; and expressed thanks to the Right Rev. the Bishops who had condescended to watch over the deliberations of this great Religious Assembly. He thanked in particular the Lord Bishop of St. David's, for his Lordship's patronage and protection of the Society. He would himself persevere in his labours, because he considered that he was doing right, and because he was convinced that he was doing good to the never-dying souls of his fellow-men.

Baron Anker, from Norway, could not, even upon a superficial view of the proceedings of the Society, but feel for it great veneration. Very little had yet been done for Norway; as, however, he was returning thither, he offered his services to promote its object in that country.

The Bishop of Norwich moved thanks to the Presbyteries in Scotland. Every one who prefers his own views of the Bible must nevertheless rejoice at the blessed effects that have resulted from the union promoted by this Society.

The Rev. Hugh Pearson seconded the motion.

The Rev. William Dealtry, in moving thanks to the Auxiliaries, noticed the increase of 8000*l*. in the contributions of those Societies, during the past year, and also the reduction in the number of Bibles and Testaments drawn in return from the depository of the Parent Institution, as shewing that a larger portion of their funds was left disposable for foreign purposes.

Lord Gambier seconded the motion.

Thanks to the President being moved by Baron Anker, were seconded by Rev. John Owen, who read a letter from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, stating, that, notwithstanding previous arrangements, business had unavoidably prevented his attendance at the present Meeting.

Thus ended the Eleventh Anniversary Meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society: a Meeting inferior to none that preceded it in general interest, notwithstanding the abridged form in which the Report was necessarily presented; and when the same shall appear at full length, that interest will doubtless be greatly augmented, from the immense scope of the Society's operations in every quarter of the globe during the past year; affording ad-

ditional evidence of the necessity and importance of such an Institution, whose sole object is to benefit mankind by diffusing throughout the habitable globe those sacred Scriptures "which were given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for correction, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The Fifteenth Anniversary of this Society was held on Tuesday, May 2d. The Rev. E. T. Vaughan of Leicester, preached before the Society, in the morning, at Blackfriar's Church, from 1 John v. 11. 12. and argued, very ably, that *the reception of Christ is essential to salvation*; thence urging the lost condition of the Heathen, and the duty of attempting to enlighten them by the Gospel.—The collection amounted to 219*l*. 4*s*.

At two o'clock, the Annual Meeting was held at Freemasons' Hall, the Right Hon. Lord Gambier, President, in the Chair. This great room was completely filled by a most respectable assembly of the members and friends of the Society.

It appeared from the Report, that the income of the Society had advanced from 11,000*l*. which was the produce of the 14th year, to 16,000*l*.; and that the exertions of the Committee were keeping due pace with the augmentation of the funds.

The Dean of Wells; Mr. Wilberforce; Mr. Stephen; the Rev. Dr. Thorpe, of Dublin; the Rev. Messrs. Simpson and Cowan, of Bristol; the Rev. Mr. Simeon, of Cambridge; the Rev. Mr. Beachcroft, of Blunham; the Rev. Daniel Wilson; the Rev. Basil Woodd; Mr. Lewis Way; and Mr. John Thornton, took a share in the business of the day.

Mr. Wilberforce was more than usually elevating and impressive; and Mr. Stephen most powerful and energetic. The spirit of all the speakers appeared to be truly Christian, and to diffuse itself over the whole assembly.

The magnitude of the Society's concerns in Western Africa, and the still greater efforts which it is about to make on that coast, seeming to require more regularity and commodiousness of intercourse than has hitherto been attained, a separate fund has been proposed for the establishment and maintenance of

such intercourse. This fund was opened at Bristol, which, with its accustomed munificence, has already contributed to it nearly *nine hundred pounds*, to which various sums have been added.

We defer any details of the plan until it has been more matured.

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE JEWS.

The Sixth Anniversary of the London Society for promoting Christianity amongst the Jews was held at the Freemasons' Tavern, on Friday the 5th of May. Two excellent sermons to recommend the cause had been previously preached; the one on Thursday evening, at St. Lawrence Jewry, by the Rev. J. W. Cunningham, M. A. Vicar of Harrow; the other on Friday morning, at St. Ann's, Soho, by the Rev. W. Dealtry, M. A. Rector of Clapham.

In the unavoidable absence of his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, patron of the Society, the chair was taken, at two o'clock, by Sir Thomas Baring, Bart., President.

The business of the day having been opened by the Chairman, the Report was read, stating many facts of a satisfactory kind, both as to the past proceedings and the future prospects of the Society. It communicated the gratifying information, that means had been afforded to liberate the Society from the whole pressure of its debt, and that there is every prospect of increased patronage and support in future. It gave a pleasing account of the Jews that had been baptized, of the Jewish children which had been admitted to the schools during the last year, together with the progress making in the publication of the Hebrew Testament, with many other interesting particulars, for which we refer to the Report itself.

Thomas Babington, Esq. M. P. moved, that the Report should be received, and printed under the direction of the Committee. He said, that he was fully convinced of the necessity of a distinct society for promoting this great cause. We had a Bible Society, which was employed in circulating the word of God in every quarter of the globe; and surely we could not forget, that the Jews were the first subject of that Bible. We had Missionary Societies which were sending Preachers of the

Word to all the world; and we must remember, that the Jews were the first Missionaries, and it was more than probable they were intended to be the last, since their dispersion into every nation of the earth seemed peculiarly to fit them for that service when they should be converted to the faith of the Gospel. He could not, therefore, but look on this Society, as the crown of that Corinthian pillar which was now raising to support the temple of God.

The Rev. Dr. Collyer said he was happy to have an opportunity of expressing the affectionate regard which he had always felt, and still did feel towards this noble Institution. He had been much gratified by the excellent Report which had been read. Whatever prejudices had existed, or might exist against this cause, he was satisfied there would at last be but one opinion. He hailed the dawn of the day, when the oppressions of the Jewish nation would cease. We should all feel and pray for a people, who had, as it were, drank the very dregs of the cup of bitterness; and in whose place we ourselves were now standing. Their final restoration was as certainly disclosed in God's word as ever their degradation had been, and it should come to pass. He said he had never stood in that place, without considering himself as surrounded by his brethren; and that he did not feel less so now, though, in consequence of the late change, he saw himself encircled by ministers and members of the Established Church. When the good of the object required it, he had with readiness resigned his office of Secretary; but his heart would never cease to breathe a fervent prayer for the success of the cause itself.

The Hon. and very Rev. the Dean of Wells moved the thanks of the meeting to his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, for his continued patronage and support. He said he felt happy in the thought that we had a patron so distinguished for his zeal in promoting every benevolent cause. —As to the objections which had been urged against the object of this institution, there was not one which would stand the test of examination. It was said by some, This is not the time! But in what time, he would ask, are we forbidden to attempt to bring men to the knowledge of the true God and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. Let an impartial man look at the signs of the present day, and he would be inclined to think it was the time. All

the wisest writers upon the subject have considered the conversion of the Jews as ultimately connected with the propagation of the Gospel throughout the World. Others have said, The heart of the Jews is so hard, it is in vain to attempt it. There was not one, however, who knew his own heart that would urge this. What was the conduct of St. Paul? He knew that the Jews had crucified Jesus Christ, and yet he could say his heart's desire and prayer was that Israel might be saved. This should be the feeling of all Christians; but as Members of the Church of England, we were especially bound to cherish it, since we had a prayer in our devotional services for the conversion of all unbelievers, among whom the Jews were placed first.

Mr. Wilberforce said, he rejoiced to see the zeal displayed in behalf of this Institution. It would be strange indeed if we could allow the objection of the hard-heartedness of the Jew to check our attempts. Was there any heart that Almighty Power could not mollify? Besides, let us ask ourselves, have they only been hard-hearted. No, surely: Christians had to reproach themselves with their want of tenderness towards the Jews. They had not shewn towards them that decisive mark of true Christianity, brotherly love. We might fairly anticipate a blessing on our present labours. The very desire to do good was an omen of success. Besides, we served a gracious Master who would say it was well that it was even in our hearts to perform this work of mercy. We witnessed a growing sense of the importance of the cause, and much had been already done. Was it not a great thing to give to the Jews the Gospel of Christ in pure Hebrew? Was it not a disgrace to the Christian Church that nearly 2000 years should have elapsed without this having been accomplished. The events connected with the change in the institution, though apparently not pleasing, yet might afford matter of joy. The testimony of Dr. Collyer had given him high satisfaction. It was delightful to behold the true principle of union displayed in the moment of separation. It was the peculiar honour of this country that it had so many excellent institutions for promoting religious knowledge among the nations; and it was the peculiar glory of this institution, that it was as it were the key-stone of the arch which he trusted was erecting to the glory of God.

The Rev. Charles Simeon expressed

himself highly pleased with what he had heard. He was abundantly gratified when he considered the spirit in which the late change had been effected. He hoped that it would have a tendency to improve all of them in that Christian love which was the crown of Christianity. The circumstances of the Society had made the change indispensable. When that was known, he trusted all would be satisfied.

The Rev. Mr. Cowan, of Bristol, rejoiced in the happy consequences which were likely to result from the late change that had been effected in the constitution of the Society.

The Rev. Mr. Dealtry said this was the first annual meeting of the Institution which he had attended. He had always wished well to the cause; but had conscientious scruples respecting the constitution of the Society until the late change had taken place.

The Hon. and Rev. G. Noel said he trusted that the last and worst captivity of the Jews was drawing to a close; and we might soon ask them, without offence, to take their harps from the willows, where they had so long been suspended, and sing us one of the songs of Zion.

Lewis Way, Esq. congratulated the Society on their possession of so excellent a President as Sir Thomas Baring. With such a pilot at the helm, we might hope for a prosperous voyage. He moved a vote of thanks for the appropriate sermons which had been preached. It was impossible to have a more convincing view of the subject presented to them than these sermons afforded. He proceeded to state the reasons why he believed the conversion of the Jews would precede that of the Gentile World. And he observed that it was very pleasing, in the absence of direct episcopal sanction, to think that the Society had so strong a testimony to the importance and propriety of its institution from an eminent Prelate now no more, Bishop Horsley. His translation of the Psalms had been just published: the whole of which bears a striking testimony to the cause of the Institution.

The Rev. Mr. Courtenay declared he had had strong prejudices against the Society, but they were removed by what he had heard in the Report, and by the arguments which had followed it. He would immediately become a subscriber.

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The Rev. Daniel Wilson also declared himself much impressed with the importance of the cause, and expressed his willingness to support it, under a conviction that the Society would proceed in its course with zeal and unostentatious energy. The spectacle of the Jewish children then present was a sufficient proof of the good that had been done and was doing.

Mr. Frey said, he would tell all objectors, that 142 Jewish children had received or were receiving Christian instruction in the schools of the Society. Besides this, 51 adult Jews had been admitted into the Church of Christ by the rite of Baptism; and if asked, Were they true converts? he could refer to that sign which God himself gave of the conversion of St. Paul—"Behold, he prayeth." There were some of these Jews preparing themselves for the ministry.

The Rev Mr. Grimshaw said, he hailed the appearance of the children and the adults whom the Society had already been the means of influencing; and he trusted they would be followed by a long train.

The Hon. Mr. Vernon, and the Rev. Messrs. Beachcroft, Woodd, and Hawtrey also addressed the Meeting.

Thanks were then voted to the Chairman, for his able conduct in regulating the business of the day.

PRAYER-BOOK AND HOMILY SOCIETY.

On Thursday last, the 4th of May, the Third Annual General Meeting of this Society was held (after a very appropriate Sermon, preached at Christ Church, Newgate-street, by the Rev. John Sargent, M. A. Rector of Graffham,) at the Albion Tavern, in Aldersgate-street. The Right Hon. Lord Gambier, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Society, took the Chair, supported by the Right Hon. Lord Calthorpe, William Wilberforce, Esq. M. P. Thomas Babington, Esq. M. P., and a numerous body of Clergy and Gentry. The Report of the Committee stated, that 9,331 Prayer-books, 975 Psalters, and 55,500 copies of the Homilies of the Church of England, printed as tracts, had been issued from the Society's Depository, which has lately been removed to No. 134, Salisbury-square, during the last year. The statement of this Society's efforts to supply the inhabitants of New South Wales, and the prisoners on board the hulks, and in Newgate, with the excellent Formularies of our National Church, very highly gratified the Meeting.

It is much to be regretted, that the usefulness of such a Society should be materially impeded by the want of funds. Its sole object is to distribute the Formularies of the Church of England.

VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

CONTINENTAL INTELLIGENCE.

ANOTHER month has passed, without any hostile blow having actually been struck between the Allies and France, and without any formal declaration of war. The dreadful note of military preparation has, nevertheless, continued to sound on all sides. The allies are mustering their armies along the French frontier, from Ostend to St. Sebastian's. The Duke of Wellington commands the right wing of this immense force, consisting of English, Hanoverians, and Dutch, and extending from the sea to the Meuse: Marshal Blucher commands along the line which extends from the Meuse to the Moselle: the Russians, under Barclay de Tolly; and the Austrians, under Prince Swartzenburgh, are to occupy the space from the Moselle to the Swiss frontier. The contingents of Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Baden, Hesse, and Denmark, will unite themselves to such parts of this combined mass, amounting in all to more than a million of men, as may most require their support. Besides this, the Swiss Cantons have declared their adherence to the cause of Europe, and their troops will doubtless form a part of the general army. The Christ. Observ. No. 161.

forces of the king of Sardinia, united with an Austro-Italian army, will operate a diversion on the side of Piedmont; and should the Neapolitan war end, as there is now a prospect of its speedily ending, with the expulsion of Murat and the consequent liberation of the large Austrian force employed against him, a serious impression may be made on France from that weakest part of its frontier. It is further said, that a considerable Spanish army has been organized and placed under the command of Castanos, in order to penetrate through Roussillon; while Marshal Beresford, with a Portuguese force, will again advance in the direction of Bayonne. And with respect to those parts of France which are washed by the ocean, the British Navy will probably be employed in subjecting them to a rigorous blockade.

The delay which has occurred in the declaration of hostilities has doubtless arisen from the desire of the allies to complete, if possible, this mighty investment before offensive measures are commenced. They have probably also been influenced by a hope that the power of Bonaparte might be weakened, rather than increased,

by the delay; and this hope appears to have been justified by the event. The French have at least had time to reflect on the prudence of putting to hazard all that is dear to them, for the sake of the Napoleon Dynasty. In consequence of this, the acclamations of joy with which Bonaparte was received by the great mass of the population, as well as by the soldiery, of France, appear in many cases, and especially among persons of property, to have given way to alarm, and dissatisfaction. Whatever preference may have existed for the more peaceful and legitimate sway of the Bourbons, has also had time to develop itself; and, encouraged by the prompt advance and imposing attitude of the allies, considerable risings in their favour are said to have taken place in several parts of France, and particularly in its western and northern provinces, where it has proved less difficult to supply the necessary arms and ammunition from England.

To meet the formidable dangers which surround him, Bonaparte appears disposed to combine with the stupendous military means which are at his command, all the enginery of the reign of terror. The old jacobinical spirit is called forth and encouraged, in the expectation, doubtless, that with the full control of the army, he can make it subservient to his own purposes. Decrees of the utmost severity are issued against the adherents of the Bourbons, even against all who shall wear the white cockade or hoist the white flag, or displace the tricoloured flag; and commissioners are sent forth, as in the time of the National Convention, with very large discretionary powers, into the provinces, in utter contempt of his new constitutional act, in order to effect such changes in their administration as circumstances may require, and to adopt measures of coercion against persons unfriendly to the existing Government. The very steps, however, which Bonaparte has taken with a view to his own security, and particularly that of inviting deliberative confederations of the lowest of the Parisian populace, the inhabitants and labourers of the Fauxbourg St Antoine and St. Marceau, seem to have struck terror into the breasts of those who recollect the scenes which France witnessed in the early years of the Revolution. And fettered as is the press in that country, several of the news-papers have not failed to sound the alarm on this occasion.

As far as we have the means of judging of the state of the public mind in France, we should conceive, that it has recently undergone a very material change. The great body of the French people, we believe, were desirous of the return of Bonaparte: they were alarmed with apprehensions (purposely excited by the partisans

of Bonaparte,) respecting the security of the property they had purchased at the national sales. They were disgusted with the revival of the mummeries of Popery, and fearful lest the priesthood should regain its ancient ascendancy and its ancient revenues. They were galled by the recollection of their national losses, and particularly the loss of Belgium; and they were impatient of what they conceived to be the influence of England in the councils of the king. They had a certain undefined expectation, that the return of Bonaparte would obviate all these evils, and they did not calculate its remoter consequences. They felt a kind of exultation in undoing all that the allies had done; the disgrace of the capture of Paris seemed already effaced by the expulsion of the Bourbons; and they stretched their limits in imagination once more to the banks of the Rhine and the Po. But in the minds of those who have any stake, however small, in the country, these feelings have been borne down by the actual circumstances of danger in which they are placed. They cannot conceal from themselves the probability that France will be overrun by strangers, that their fields will be laid waste, their cities pillaged, and Paris itself, the pride of Frenchmen, levelled with the dust. The alarm, especially in the capital, and in the provinces to the east and north of it, is very great. Money, even for the ordinary transactions of life, can with difficulty be obtained: it is sought, in order to be concealed. The value of landed property has suddenly fallen to less than a half of what it was a few months ago—and shipping cannot be sold at any price. These effects they probably had not thought of, until they were compelled to experience them; and the reaction produced by them appears to be considerable. And when to these grounds of dissatisfaction and alarm, are added the fresh burdens of a pecuniary kind, which they must sustain; the immense drains which must be made on the population, with a view to military service; and all the accumulated evils of such a conflict as that of which their country is about to become the theatre, we shall have no difficulty in accounting for a considerable change in the public sentiment. In short, the French love themselves and their own interests better than they love Bonaparte. They know full well, that it is against him personally that the hostility of the allies is directed, and that they have only to separate their cause from his, in order to secure their immunity from the threatened and impending dangers. It is scarcely possible, that in the present circumstances of France, these considerations should not operate powerfully in generating a lukewarmness in the cause of Bonaparte, even among those attached

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to him, especially in the provinces which are likely first to become the seat of war. If the ultimate success of the allies appear to them probable, then they must feel, that in proportion to the pertinacity of their resistance, is likely to be the extent of their suffering. There is at the same time nothing of the enthusiastic feeling of the revolutionary period, to inspirit their efforts and to counteract these seasonable alarms and sober calculations. They must be sensible, that they are fighting not for personal freedom, or national independence; not for their own interest, or those of their children, but for the firm establishment of a military despotism in their own country, for the perpetuation of war with the rest of Europe, and for the personal aggrandizement of Bonaparte.

That these considerations will be sufficiently operative to induce the French Nation generally to separate their fortunes from those of Bonaparte, and thus to avert the impending conflict, we do not believe. The army in fact governs France; and the army burns for an opportunity of avenging past disgrace, as well as of acquiring fresh glory and fresh pillage, and will doubtless drag the nation along with it. War, therefore, seems inevitable. Indeed, we may regard ourselves as already at war; and if no blow has yet been struck, it is only because neither party is fully prepared to strike. Reasoning according to human probabilities, the success of the allies seem scarcely to be doubted. At the same time the uncertainties of war are proverbial; and so many striking instances of providential interference have recently occurred, baffling all the calculations of the wise, and bringing to nought the wisdom of the prudent, that when we consider the prospect before us, we are far from being confident in our expectations of a speedy termination of the conflict. We are now fully convinced, that the allies have abundant and just cause of war against Bonaparte; and that a short and feverish truce ending in a war, attended with incalculably greater disadvantages, was all that could fairly be hoped for from listening to the pacific overtures of Bonaparte. We are also clearly bound by our engagements to our allies, as well as by a view to our own safety, to prevent the re-establishment of Bonaparte on the throne of France. Still, however just may be our ground of war; however expedient and even necessary it may be, in the present instance, to prefer its hazards to those of peace; we cannot disconnect from our calculations of probable success, the consideration that we appear, among other objects indeed of the highest interest to the world at large, to be fighting for the restoration of the papal

power, and the maintenance of papal darkness—for the revival of the order of Jesuits—for the establishment of the Inquisition—for the renewal of the French Slave Trade. Is it necessary, we again ask, that we should go forward to the fight, loaded with these impediments to success? Can nothing be done by Great Britain to deliver at least herself from the guilt of upholding institutions which we can have no doubt are offensive to the Almighty, and which will probably ere long be swept away, involving those who support them in the ruin? Surely we may, as respects France, secure some prospective stipulations in favour of Africa, and in favour also of the Protestant Churches, in case the Bourbons should be restored. In short, let our Government do all that can be done to provide for the grand interests of humanity, morality, and religion, at this awful crisis; and they will have this farther security for success, that they will unite in their favour the wishes, the hopes, and the fervent unwearied prayers of all good men throughout the world. It cannot be supposed, for example, that those who have felt deeply for the miseries of Africa, and have laboured strenuously for her rescue, if they should believe that the restoration of Louis would be the means of restoring the slave trade, should as anxiously desire that event as they would if all their apprehensions on this head were obviated by an express stipulation.

By way of increasing his means of defence, Bonaparte has made a selection from the national guard, to serve for garrisons to the fortified towns. He has also formed the crews of the ships of war into corps of cannoniers, and landed their guns for battering trains. The offers of voluntary service of horses, or of money, made to the king during the month of March he has ordered to be carried into effect without delay; the men and horses to be marched to the dépôts, the money to be paid into the treasury.

Bonaparte has published a Decree, intended, doubtless, in common with his Decree abolishing the Slave Trade, to have its effect on public opinion in this country, for establishing schools throughout France, on the system of Bell and Lancaster. We shall rejoice in the effect, in whatever motive the Decree may have originated.

As for the vaunted liberty which is given to the press in France, it consists, as far as we can perceive, only in this, that nine censors have been substituted for thirty; and that the mixture of Jacobin Councils in the Cabinet of Bonaparte, encouraged, for a few days, some political discussions; which, however, have evidently been re-

pressed. The French newspapers are filled, as they used to be under Bonaparte's former reign, with the most unblushing fabrications, and mendacious statements, which remain uncontradicted in France, although exposed in every other country of Europe.

Murat has experienced a succession of disasters. After being forced to retreat towards Naples, his route was intercepted. In an attempt to force his way through the opposing lines, he was severely beaten,

and obliged to retrograde. Strong hopes are entertained that his power will be speedily and effectually extinguished—He had previously applied to the Austrian commander for an armistice, but was refused.

The only intelligence which has recently been received of the proceedings of the king of Spain respects a visit which he paid to the house of the holy Inquisition, when he doubtless minutely inspected all its dungeons and instruments of torture.

GREAT BRITAIN.

The great question of peace or war with Bonaparte has been amply discussed in both houses of parliament; and the expediency of the latter alternative has been decided by large majorities—in the house of lords of 156 to 44; and in the house of commons of 331 to 92. In the upper house, lord Grenville and his friends; and in the lower house, Mr. Grattan, Mr. Plunkett, Mr. Elliott, and many other members who have usually voted with the opposition party, took part with government, leaving in the minority few besides the former adherents of Mr. Fox and those who are now allied with Sir F. Burdett. The exposition which has been made in the course of these discussions, of the fraudulent practices of Bonaparte, and the total destitution of principle which marked his conduct, has added to the impression on the public mind of his utter faithlessness, and of the impossibility of binding him by any of the ordinary bonds to which nations have trusted for their security.—This country has agreed to maintain at least 150,000 men in the

field, and to pay five millions to the other powers as a subsidy. Austria, Russia, and Prussia have each bound themselves to maintain respectively at least an equal number of men; and this exclusive of garrisons, and of the forces which the other allied states may furnish.

Bills have been brought into Parliament for enrolling the Militia and accepting the voluntary offers of service of the Local Militia, should they be required for domestic purposes. The property tax has been revived.

A Bill has passed the House of Commons for punishing as a felony the advance of capital for the carrying on of a foreign slave trade. And for the more effectual prevention of this crime, it is even rendered highly penal to advance money on the credit of land, houses, or Negroes, in colonies where the slave trade is still permitted.

We are happy to observe that houses appropriated solely to purposes of public worship or instruction are exempted from all parochial rates.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A LAYMAN; CLERICUS LANCASTRIENSIS; DR. HALES; SUASOR; A. A.; MATHESES; C. L.; E. A. on Novel Reading; P. B.; and LAICUS, have been received, and are under consideration.

S. W. will be inserted.

We have not been able to lay our hands on the communications of A. E.; but hope to convey them as directed.

We think that EGLWEYSWR will find answers to all the questions he has suggested, in more than one volume of the Christian Observer.

The same answer must satisfy BETA.

Has B. K. read our Reviews of the works of Milner, Scott, or Cooper, or the paper of T. S. in a late Number?

C. W. must have patience.

The question of ADOLESCENS has been answered by a recent Correspondent, with all the accuracy, we believe, of which the case admits.

We think that A CONSTANT READER can scarcely fail to be convinced by the pages of Hooker. But, if Hooker had never written, such charges as those referred to carry refutation along with them.

We think that THEODONIS somewhat misconceives the statements of Bishop Hopkins.